

Ivories as Pilgrimage Art

A New Frame for the “Frame Group”

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In the second volume of their great corpus of medieval Byzantine ivories, first published in 1934, Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann divided the carved panels into five groups. The last of these they called the “frame group” (*Rahmengruppe*), because of the distinctive strips containing simplified leaf, zigzag, or pearl-and-lozenge borders that surround many of the pieces.¹ Goldschmidt and Weitzmann assigned twenty-four ivories to this group, which are related to each other not only by the borders but also by several other stylistic and technical features.² Another closely

related ivory surfaced on the art market, when it was sold at auction by Christie’s in January 1990 (fig. 7).³ It is a panel showing the Annunciation, from the same hand as an ivory with the Presentation already published by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann as a member of their *Rahmengruppe* (fig. 12).⁴

These ivories will be called here by their conventional name of the “frame group.” By this name, I refer only to their close affiliation in technique, figure style, ornament, and iconography. By using this term, however, I do not wish to imply that all the ivories discussed were necessarily produced by the same “workshop.” Nor do I wish to imply that the artists who produced these ivories may not have carved other extant ivories that are not discussed here. My concern is not to define the parameters of a particular “workshop,” but rather to explore the reception of some of the related ivories that Goldschmidt and Weitzmann included in their original grouping.

For their assistance and hospitality, I am grateful to the staff of the Department of Medieval Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and especially to Charles Little. I am also indebted to Anthony Cutler, Jannic Durand, and Paul Williamson, as well as the two anonymous readers, for their help in the preparation of this study.

1 A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1930–34), 2:20–21.

2 Ibid., 2:73–78, nos. 197–219, pls. 65–70. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann associated a number of other ivories with these works, mainly because of similarities in the carving of leaf ornaments and architectural features such as walls, but they did not include them with the frame group proper. These associated ivories include two panels in the Vatican depicting the Ascension and the Pentecost (2:78, no. 221a and b, pl. 71), a casket with Genesis scenes in Cologne (1:61–62, no. 118, pl. 68), a panel from a similar casket in Krakau (1:61, no. 115, pl. 67), and several secular ivories (1:61–62, nos. 116, 119, pl. 67; 2:76, 78, figs. 32, 34). The style and technique of carving human figures in these associated ivories are completely distinct from those of the ivories that Goldschmidt and Weitzmann included in the

frame group. On the other hand, Goldschmidt and Weitzmann were of the opinion that the figures in a Last Judgment panel in the Victoria and Albert Museum resemble those of members of the frame group without, however, including it in their number. Ibid., 2:60, no. 123, pl. 45.

3 *Old Master Paintings and Drawings, Continental Furniture, Tapestries, Arms and Armour, Sculpture and Works of Art* (auction catalogue, Christie’s East, New York, 8 January 1990), lot 15.

4 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:77, no. 214, pl. 69.

The principal characteristics of the frame group ivories are as follows. The compositions tend to be crowded with little empty space (see, especially, figs. 1, 4, 9–10, 13–14, 20, and 23). The carving of the panels, when compared to other Byzantine ivories, frequently has a flat appearance. Many ivories are carved in two distinct planes, a background and a foreground. The uppermost plane is often deeply undercut, but it is nonetheless visualized as a two-dimensional surface with the drapery shown by incised lines (see, for example, figs. 4, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, and 20). There is a fondness for rendering heads in full profile, with the features being carved on the hidden side (the side of the head turned away from the viewer). Overall, the figures in the ivories often have a somewhat crudely carved and heavy appearance, which has seemed to some observers to lack the refinement of the most accomplished Byzantine ivories.⁵ The panels are also linked by some more specific details, especially a habit of rendering stonework, whether a crib, a sarcophagus, or a wall, as a series of masonry courses topped by a frieze of beads in the form of rectangles or lunettes (figs. 1, 4, 9–10, 13, 18, and 20–21).

Because of these similarities, it has been generally accepted that these ivories are related to each other. However, there has been far less agreement on where or when they might have been produced. In addition to their distinctive style, the panels have an unusual iconography that generally follows Byzantine models, but has evident western elements. Writing in 1899, Ettore Modigliani, the first author to propose a provenance, maintained that four of the ivories in the group, which are now in Ravenna, may have been produced in Italy at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, under the influence of both Byzantium and the Romanesque art of the West.⁶ This view was reiterated in 1930 by Andrew Keck, who assigned the whole group to Venice between the late twelfth and mid-thirteenth centuries, together with some other ivories, notably a panel with the Last Judgment in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁷ More recently, the catalogues

of the exhibitions of Byzantine art held in Paris in 1992 and in New York in 1997 have both suggested Venice as the provenance for individual members of the frame group.⁸

A contrary view was first put forward by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann in their corpus of 1934. They assigned the ivories to eleventh- or early twelfth-century Byzantium, viewing them as an extension of the styles of earlier Byzantine ivory carving.⁹ A Byzantine, specifically Constantinopolitan, origin was also maintained by Clementina Rizzardi in 1984, who dated the panels to the beginning of the twelfth century.¹⁰ Anthony Cutler noted that there is no evidence to link the ivories to Venice.¹¹ One of the most recent discussions of the group, by John Hanson, returns to Modigliani's original perception of "Romanesque" tendencies, but sees them as western influence on Byzantium, rather than the other way around.¹² In

and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:60, no. 123, pl. 45, and P. Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury: The Art of the Middle Ages in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1986), 162. The figure style of this panel is, in fact, distinct from that of the ivories included by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann in their frame group. The execution is more refined, the faces are more rounded and less schematic, the profiles are less rigid, and the bottoms of the hems are more deeply undercut, giving the drapery a more realistic effect.

8 *Byzance: L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*, exhibition catalogue, Musée du Louvre (Paris, 1992), 263, no. 172; H. C. Evans and W. D. Wixom, eds., *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, exhibition catalogue, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, 1997), 492–94, nos. 328–29. The arguments for a western provenance have been forcefully restated by J. Durand, "L'icône reliquaire de la Nativité de l'ancienne collection Marquet de Vasselot," *Revue du Louvre* 46, no. 3 (1996): 29–41, esp. 34, 39. See also D. Gaborit-Chopin, *Ivoires médiévaux I^{er}–XV^e siècle*, Musée du Louvre, Département des Objets d'Art (Paris, 2003), no. 34, 125–28.

9 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:20–21.

10 C. Rizzardi, "Alcuni avori con scene cristologiche del Museo Nazionale di Ravenna nell'ambito della cultura artistica mediobizantina," *Corsi Rav* 31 (1984): 407–40, esp. 440.

11 A. Cutler, *The Hand of the Master: Craftsmanship, Ivory, and Society in Byzantium (9th–11th centuries)* (Princeton, 1994), 76–78.

12 J. Hanson, "The Stuttgart Casket and the Permeability of the Byzantine Artistic Tradition," *Gesta* 37, no. 1 (1998): 13–25, esp. 21–23; Y. Piatnitsky et al., eds., *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia: Orthodox Art from the Sixth to the Twentieth Century*, exhibition catalogue (St. Petersburg–London, 2000), 92, no. B69, also attribute the ivories of the Crucifixion and Dormition in the Hermitage Museum to Byzantium in the twelfth century.

5 E. Modigliani, "Dittico d'avorio nella Biblioteca Barberini," *L'arte* 2 (1899): 288–95, esp. 294; A. S. Keck, "A Group of Italo-Byzantine Ivories," *ArtB* 12, no. 2 (1930): 147–62, esp. 148.

6 Modigliani, "Dittico," 294–95.

7 Keck, "Group," 152, 161–62, fig. 24. On the ivory with the Last Judgment in the Victoria and Albert Museum, see also Goldschmidt

summary, the scholarship on the frame group ivories has dated them anywhere between the eleventh and the mid-thirteenth centuries, and has assigned them either to Byzantium or to Italy, especially Venice.

I propose to look at the group from a somewhat different perspective. The question of origin will at least initially be set aside. Instead, I will attempt to find within the ivories some pointers that can provide a more precise chronology. I also consider the market, or patrons, for which the panels may have been made. Were the intended consumers of these products Byzantines or westerners? When examined from this perspective of reception rather than provenance, the ivories can provide some more secure conclusions.

Dating

The clearest chronological indication provided by the ivories is found in a panel now in the Victoria and Albert Museum of London (fig. 1).¹³ This ivory contains a cycle of six episodes from the life of Christ. In general, the scenes follow the standard iconography of the Byzantine New Testament cycle, but there is one noteworthy exception: the Annunciation at the beginning of the series. Here the architecture of the building in the background takes a novel form that is, to my knowledge, without parallel in Byzantine art. The structure framing the Virgin consists of a tiled roof supported on two slender columns, beneath which she stands. To the left is a masonry wall, behind which are two free-standing columns. While it is not unusual, in depictions of the Annunciation, to find columns supporting various architectural elements of the Virgin's house, these columns support absolutely nothing. There are a few late Byzantine and post-Byzantine paintings of the Annunciation that depict a single freestanding column, perhaps with symbolic intent;¹⁴ however, there are no

Byzantine examples with two such columns. The most likely explanation for the twin columns on the ivory is that they reference the grotto of the Annunciation in Nazareth, a well-known pilgrimage site.

After their capture of Nazareth in 1099, the crusaders constructed a new church over the cave in which the Annunciation had taken place.¹⁵ This church was seen by the abbot Daniel, the Russian pilgrim who visited Nazareth between 1106 and 1108;¹⁶ now, however, it no longer survives, having been destroyed in the thirteenth century.¹⁷ One of the piers of the new church was placed directly over the southwest corner of the grotto. To support the pier, the crusaders inserted two granite columns into the grotto beneath it (fig. 2). By using the columns for support, instead of extending the full bulk of the pier down into the cave, the builders were able to avoid taking up too much of the restricted space of the grotto.¹⁸ The two columns were mentioned by later visitors to the holy site; by Quaresmius, for example, in the early seventeenth century. Quaresmius says that the northern column was called the Column of Mary, because "it is piously believed that the holy Virgin was there when she was accosted by the angel," while the southern column was named the Column of the Angel.¹⁹ The columns have kept these names into the modern period, and are still displayed in the reconstructed church (fig. 2).²⁰

The column of the Virgin appears on its own in a small group of Italian paintings of the Annunciation

13 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:73–74, no. 198, pl. 66; Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury* (n. 7 above), 165; Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium* (n. 8 above), 492, no. 328.

14 H. Papastavrou, "Le symbolisme de la colonne dans la scène de l'Annonciation," *Δελτ. Χριστ. Αρχ. Ετ.* 15 (1989–90): 145–60. To the examples listed by Papastavrou can be added the wall painting at Dayr al-Suryan, in which a low column carrying an incense burner stands at the bottom of the scene. See L.-A. Hunt, "The Fine Incense of Virginité: A Late Twelfth-Century Wallpainting of the Annunciation

at the Monastery of the Syrians, Egypt," *BMGS* 19 (1995): 182–232, fig. 1; reprinted in eadem, *Byzantium, Eastern Christendom and Islam: Art at the Crossroads of the Medieval Mediterranean* (London, 1998), 1:158–204, esp. 198–99. Hunt identifies the column with the altar at the site of the Annunciation described by the abbot Daniel.

15 J. Folda, *The Nazareth Capitals and the Crusader Shrine of the Annunciation*, College Art Association Monographs, 42 (University Park, PA, 1986), 69–70; idem, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098–1187* (Cambridge, 1995), 66.

16 J. Wilkinson, J. Hill, and W. F. Ryan, trans., *Jerusalem Pilgrimage, 1099–1185* (London, 1988), 163–64.

17 Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 66.

18 B. Bagatti, *Excavations in Nazareth*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning till the XII Century* (Jerusalem, 1969), 176, figs. 137, 140; B. Bagatti, *Gli scavi di Nazaret*, vol. 2, *Dal secolo XII ad oggi* (Jerusalem, 1984), 61, fig. 23.

19 S. De Sandoli, ed. and trans., *Francisci Quaresmii Elucidatio terrae sanctae* (Jerusalem, 1989), 389.

20 F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq, *DACL* (Paris, 1907), 1:2245–46.



FIG. 1 London, Victoria and Albert Museum, ivory panel. Scenes from the life of Christ. Photo courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

dating to the mid-fourteenth century.²¹ These paintings illustrate a legend recorded by Niccolò da Poggibonsi, who visited Nazareth during the 1340s. According to this pilgrim's account, the grotto contained the column that the Virgin grasped in fear when the angel accosted

21 R. A. Katzenstein, "Three Liturgical Manuscripts from San Marco: Art and Patronage in Mid-Trecento Venice" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1987), 201–4.

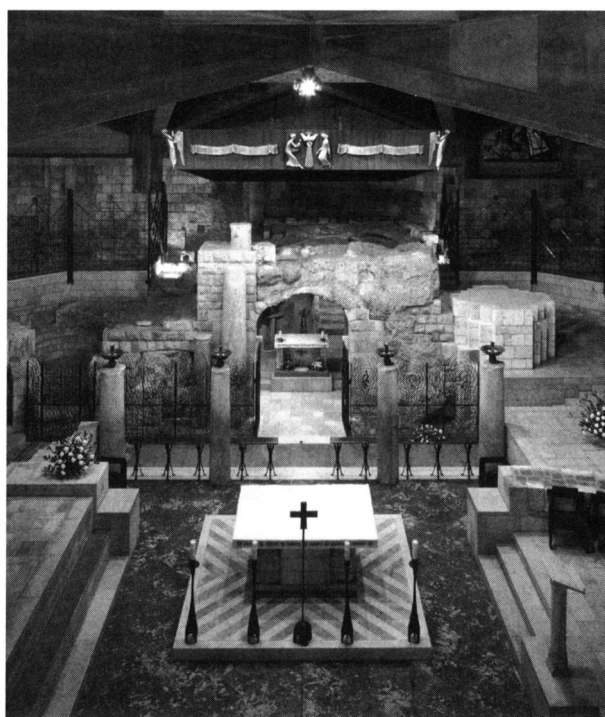


FIG. 2 Nazareth, Church of the Annunciation. Grotto of the Annunciation with the Column of Mary and the Column of the Angel in the modern setting. Photo courtesy of John Crook

her.²² Her terrified reaction is illustrated in an evangeliary made for the church of San Marco, Venice, in the time of Doge Andrea Dandolo (1343–54) (fig. 3).²³ Here the Virgin dramatically clasps the column with both arms as she recoils from Gabriel. A similar iconography appears in contemporary Venetian panel paintings, for example, on an altar frontal attributed to Paolo Veneziano in San Pantaleone, Venice,²⁴ and a triptych attributed to Lorenzo Veneziano.²⁵ The underdrawing

22 A. Bacchi and P. B. Bagatti, eds., *Niccolò da Poggibonsi, Libro d'Oltramare (1346–50)* (Jerusalem, 1945), chap. 127; Katzenstein, "Three Liturgical Manuscripts," 203–4.

23 Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS Lat. I, 100, fol. 64v; Katzenstein, "Three Liturgical Manuscripts," 54; S. Marcon, ed., *I libri di San Marco: I manoscritti liturgici della basilica marciana*, exhibition catalogue, Libreria Sansoviniana (Venice, 1995), 127–29, no. 33, fig. 82.

24 R. Palluchini, *La pittura veneziana del trecento* (Venice, 1964), 21, fig. 25; F. Pedrocchi, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan, 2003), 134–37, no. 1.

25 Palluchini, *Pittura veneziana*, 173, fig. 521.



FIG. 3 Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS Lat. I, 100, fol. 64v. The Annunciation with the Virgin clasping her column. After H. Papastavrou, "Le symbolisme de la colonne dans la scène de l'Annonciation," *Δελτ. Χριστ. Αρχ.Ετ.* 15 (1989–90): fig. 16

of a wall painting of 1340–44 in the Cappella di San Galgano in Montesiepi, Tuscany, also showed the Virgin clutching the column in fright.²⁶

The account of Niccolò da Poggibonsi clearly links the column depicted in these paintings with the pilgrimage site in the Holy Land. Likewise, the two freestanding columns depicted in the Annunciation scene on the ivory in the Victoria and Albert museum must depict the two columns of the Virgin and the Angel at Nazareth.²⁷ This identification proves that the panel cannot have been carved before the twelfth century. Because the twin columns were inserted to support the crusader church, they were not in place before 1099. Furthermore, it is

unlikely that the two columns would have acquired their legendary association with the Virgin and the Angel while the memory of their installation by the crusaders was still fresh. One should probably allow at least some decades for their status as relics to grow.

A date after the end of the eleventh century for the frame group accords with the evidence of their iconography, particularly the appearance of the Lamentation on five of the panels (e.g., figs. 4 and 14).²⁸ In this scene, as portrayed on the ivories, the body of Christ is laid out naked, except for a loincloth, on its shroud, while Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus embrace the feet, and the Virgin, in a kneeling or half-kneeling position, embraces the head and upper body. In Byzantine art, this composition does not occur before the late eleventh century.²⁹ The earliest examples are the gospel book in Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS 5,³⁰ and a lectionary in the Vatican Library, MS Gr. 1156.³¹ As will be shown below, a miniature in a crusader manuscript, the *Melisende Psalter*, which was painted in Jerusalem between 1131 and 1143, provides the closest parallel to the Lamentation scenes in the frame group ivories (fig. 5).³² In summary, we have a secure *terminus post quem* for the manufacture of the ivories, namely the construction of the crusader church at Nazareth at the very beginning of the twelfth century, which must have preceded the legendary status of the two columns by several decades.

28 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:75–77, nos. 204, 207–9, 213, pls. 67–69.

29 K. Weitzmann, "The Origin of the Threnos," in M. Meiss, ed., *De artibus opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky* (New York, 1961), 476–90, esp. 485, dates the composition to the tenth century, but his chronology is based on his eleventh-century dating of the ivories in the frame group, which here are shown to be from no earlier than the twelfth century.

30 Folio 92v. V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 191, fig. 243 (with dating to the end of the eleventh century); P. Eleuteri, ed., *I manoscritti greci della Biblioteca Palatina di Parma* (Milan, 1993), 3–13 (with dating to the second half of the eleventh century).

31 Folio 194v. Weitzmann, "Origin of the Threnos," 486, fig. 16 (with dating to the eleventh or twelfth century); J. M. Plotzek, ed., *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana: Liturgie und Andacht im Mittelalter*, exhibition catalogue, Cologne, Erzbischöfliches Diözesanmuseum (Stuttgart, 1992), 128–31, esp. 129 (with dating to last third of eleventh century).

32 British Library, Egerton MS 1139, fol. 9r; H. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford, 1957), 5–6, fig. 9a; Folda, *Art of the Crusaders* (n. 15 above), 137–62, pl. 6.8q.

26 E. Borsook, *Affreschi di Montesiepi* (Florence, 1969), 29–33, pls. 46–47.

27 It is possible that the wall seen in front of the columns on the ivory also depicts a feature of the grotto. According to Niccolò da Poggibonsi: "dappiè della colonna, si è un poco di murello, dov'ella [the Virgin] usava di stare in orazione." Bacchi and Bagatti, *Niccolò da Poggibonsi*, chap. 127.



FIG. 4 London, Wernher Collection, ivory panel. The Deposition, Lamentation, Anastasis, and Dormition. Photo courtesy of English Heritage Photo Library

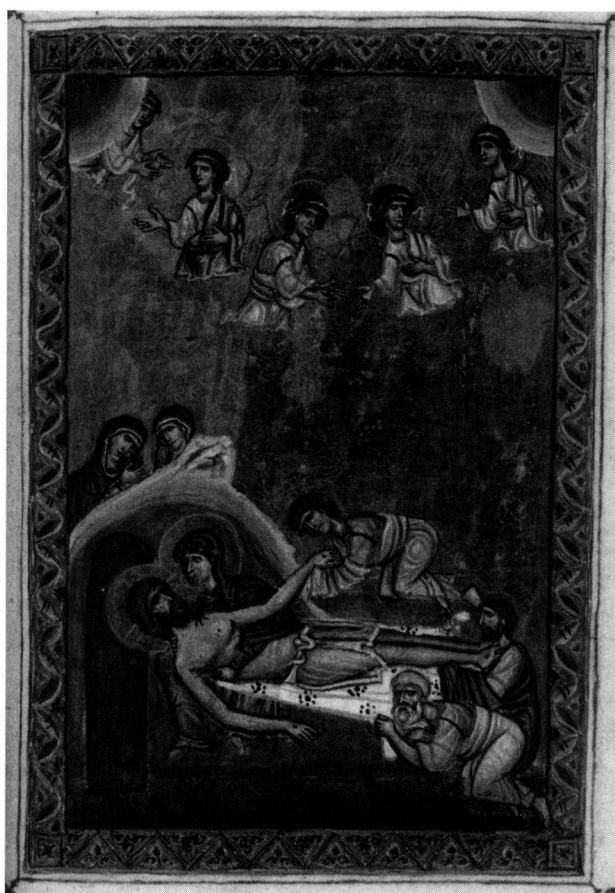


FIG. 5 (right) London, British Library, MS Egerton 1139 (the Melisende Psalter), fol. 9r. The Lamentation. Photo courtesy of the British Library.



FIG. 6
Nerezi, St. Panteleimon,
wall painting. The
Lamentation.
Photo courtesy of
The Courtauld
Institute of Art.

Market

Whatever their place of manufacture, there can be little doubt that the ivories were produced for western clients. The rendering of Byzantine iconography has too many anomalies and is simply too eccentric to have satisfied worshippers accustomed to the iconographic conventions of the Byzantine church. Some of the departures from the normal canons of Byzantine art are relatively minor, but others are more significant and betray a different expectation on the part of the original users of the ivories.

We have already noted the anomalous twin columns in the Annunciation scene on the panel in

the Victoria and Albert Museum. Two other panels in the frame group, the one sold at Christie's (fig. 7) and another now in Pesaro (fig. 8),³³ depict the Annunciation, and both present the curious feature of having the angel stand on a large projecting rock as he delivers his message. In the Pesaro ivory the stone has a cubic form, which is distinguished by its rough surface from the finished step on which the Virgin stands. On the other panel, the stone beneath the angel has an even more natural appearance, having two peaks, one under each foot. I know of no parallels in Byzantine

33 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:76, no. 211a, pl. 69.



FIG. 7 Ivory panel sold at Christie's, New York, January 1990. The Annunciation. After *Old Master Paintings and Drawings, Continental Furniture, Tapestries, Arms and Armour, Sculpture and Works of Art* (auction catalogue, Christie's East, New York, 8 January 1990), lot 15



FIG. 8 Pesaro, Museo del Palazzo Ducale, ivory panel. The Annunciation. Photo by H. Maguire

art for such a rock serving as a pedestal for Gabriel in the Annunciation.³⁴ However, the carvers of the frame group ivories had a predilection for such rocky supports in their compositions.

Several of the ivories show a tendency to conflate scenes that were distinct in canonical Byzantine art. A panel now in the Walters Art Museum, which combines the Nativity with the Adoration of the Magi (fig. 9), is a case in point.³⁵ Here we see many of the usual elements of a Byzantine Nativity, including the adoring angels, the seated Joseph, and the flocks in the fields. The shepherds who should accompany the sheep, however, are missing. Instead, prominence is given to the three Magi, who bring their gifts to Mary and her child. The Virgin has taken Christ out of his crib, and has seated him on her lap, leaving the manger empty beside her, with the heads of the ox and the ass gazing into it. The empty manger is highly unusual. In scenes of the Nativity, Byzantine artists showed Christ lying in the manger, while they omitted the crib altogether in scenes of the Adoration on its own.³⁶ Only outside of Byzantium was the manger occasionally shown empty, as can be found in an eleventh-century Sacramentary in St. Gall, where the Virgin reclines holding the child in her lap beside the empty crib.³⁷ The empty manger also

appears in a couple of Nativity scenes in manuscripts painted in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia during the sixth decade of the thirteenth century.³⁸

Another peculiarity in the treatment of the Nativity among the frame group ivories is the form taken by the offerings of the Magi. This anomaly can be seen most clearly on a panel in Ravenna, in which the Magi carry bowls or boxes with four stick-like objects protruding strongly at the top of each (fig. 10).³⁹ As Goldschmidt and Weitzmann observed, these objects are similar to the medical instruments that project from the boxes held by Saints Cosmas and Damian,⁴⁰ which can be seen in the portrayals of the two medical saints at the bottom of the two wings of an ivory triptych now in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris (fig. 11).⁴¹ Here, also, the frame group panel seems to conflate two distinct iconographic types, the Magi and the holy doctors.

In an ivory of the Presentation that was formerly in the Robert von Hirsch collection, we find the reappearance of the rock used to support one of the figures (fig. 12).⁴² In this case it is the prophetess Anna who stands on a projecting stone ledge, at the far right of the composition. I do not know of this feature occurring in any Byzantine versions of the scene, although some thirteenth-century Armenian manuscript illuminations show Anna standing upon the step of the bema of the Holy of Holies in the Temple.⁴³ In the ivory from

34 In a few Byzantine and medieval Italian Annunciation scenes the angel stands on a rocky or stony ground, but the exaggerated outcrops seen in the two frame group ivories are, to my knowledge, unique. For Gabriel with his left foot raised on a low step, see the ivory panel in the Hermitage Museum; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:43, no. 59, pl. 23; Piatnitsky et al., *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia* (n. 12 above), 77, no. B47. For the angel standing on a fissured rocky ground, see, for example, the altar frontal by Paolo Veneziano in the church of San Pantaleone, Venice; Palluchini, *Pittura veneziana del trecento* (n. 24 above), 21, fig. 25. The rocky supports beneath the figures are also somewhat reminiscent of the outcrops that bear figures in some Carolingian ivories. See, for example, a panel with the Crucifixion and the Woman at the Tomb in Liverpool; A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1914), 1:68–69, no. 139, pl. 59. In the Carolingian ivories, however, the rocky terrain can be interpreted more as a device to divide one scene from another than as an iconographic element.

35 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:74, no. 199, pl. 66; R. H. Randall, *Masterpieces of Ivory from the Walters Art Gallery* (New York, 1985), 126, no. 196.

36 G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'évangile aux XIV^e, XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1960), 93–169.

37 St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, MS 340; A. Knoepfli, *Kunstgeschichte des Bodenseeraumes* (Constance, 1961), 1:68, fig. 64. A window in

Merseberg Cathedral, dated around 1250, also shows the Virgin with Christ on her lap and the manger empty behind her; G. Aust, *Die Geburt Christi* (Düsseldorf, 1953), 30, pl. 10b.

38 S. Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia* (Washington, DC, 1993), 52, 60, fig. 212 (Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, MS 251, fol. 15v); *ibid.*, 55–56, 61, fig. 183 (Washington, DC, Freer Gallery, MS 32.18, pp. 8–9). A later example from Frankish Greece can be found in the frescoes of the Omorphi Ekklesia, Aegina; see C. Pennas, *Byzantine Aigina* (Athens, 2005), 26, figs. 29–30.

39 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:74, no. 203, pl. 67; L. Martini and C. Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini e medievali nel Museo Nazionale di Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1990), 67–69, no. 5.

40 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:20.

41 *Ibid.*, 2:37, no. 39, pl. 16.

42 *Ibid.*, 2:77, no. 214, pl. 69.

43 Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting*, fig. 357 (Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, MS 2563, fol. 191), fig. 358 (Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, MS 2568, fol. 159v), and fig. 361 (Erevan, Matenadaran, MS 979, fol. 58v).



FIG. 9 (above, left)
Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, ivory panel. The Nativity. Photo courtesy of The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

FIG. 10 (above, right)
Ravenna, Museo Nazionale, ivory panel. The Nativity. After L. Martini and C. Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini e medievali nel Museo Nazionale di Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1990), no. 5

FIG. 11 (left)
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, ivory triptych. Photo courtesy of Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

the von Hirsch collection, this architectural element has been converted into a rock with an uneven surface.

One of the most iconographically complex panels in the frame group is an ivory in St. Petersburg (fig. 13).⁴⁴ This panel combines the Crucifixion with elements adapted from the standard Byzantine composition of the Anastasis. Beneath the cross four figures rise from their tombs with their hands raised: to the left a bearded man and a woman, and to the right two crowned kings. These individuals can be identified as Adam and Eve and the Old Testament kings David and Solomon, who were often shown in the Anastasis rising from their coffins on the lower left and right of the scene respectively (compare figs. 4 and 18).⁴⁵ Carolingian and Ottonian artists depicted the resurrection of the dead from their tombs beneath the Crucifixion with relative frequency;⁴⁶ the motif was an illustration of Matthew 27:52, which states that at the death of Christ the graves were opened and many bodies of saints that had died arose. Byzantine artists also occasionally portrayed the dead rising from graves below the cross, as in the thirteenth-century fresco at Sopoćani.⁴⁷ But even though the Crucifixion and the Anastasis were linked in the Byzantine liturgy, there are no instances in Byzantine art, other than the ivory in St. Petersburg, in which the dead beneath the Crucifixion were specifically represented as Adam and Eve and the two Old Testament kings. The St. Petersburg ivory represents a unique conflation of two separate Byzantine iconographies.

Three of the panels in the frame group, now in Ravenna (fig. 14), Constance, and Berlin, portray scenes



FIG. 12 Ivory formerly in the Robert von Hirsch Collection, Basel. The Presentation. Photo Sotheby's, London, 22 June 1978, lot 275

of the Deposition that show another conflation.⁴⁸ On these ivories, the centurion stands to the right of the composition, wearing a cloth on his head, holding a round shield, and looking up at Christ as he is taken down from the cross. His figure type is derived from that of the centurion in the Crucifixion, as is demonstrated by a comparison of the ivories in Ravenna and Constance with the one in St. Petersburg (fig. 13). The centurion does not appear beside the Deposition in Byzantine art, and, indeed, he has no place there. The Gospels speak of the centurion and of his declaration, "Truly this was the son of God," *before* they describe the Deposition.⁴⁹ However, the centurion can be found flanking the Deposition in the West, especially in Italy. Most notably he is shown in the remarkable relief by Benedetto Antelami in Parma

44 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:74, no. 201, pl. 66; Piatnitsky et al., *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia* (n. 12 above), 92, no. B69.

45 A. D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), 146–50.

46 G. Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst* (Gütersloh, 1966–91), 2:125, fig. 364 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 9428, fol. 43v), 125, fig. 365 (ivory panel on the cover of Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Lat. 4452), 125, fig. 366 (ivory panel on the cover of Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 9383), 125, fig. 371 (ivory panel on the cover of Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 9453), 125, fig. 373 (ivory of Bishop Adalbero I, Metz Museum), 125, fig. 377 (ivory panel in Collégiale Notre Dame, Tongern), 125, fig. 381 (Göttingen University Library, MS Theol. 231, fol. 60v), 125, fig. 385 (Munich, Staatsbibliothek, MS Lat. 13601, fol. 3v); Hanson, "The Stuttgart Casket" (n. 12 above), 21–22.

47 V. J. Djurić, *Sopoćani* (Leipzig, 1967), pl. 16.

48 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:75, nos. 204, 207–8, pls. 67–68; Martini and Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini* (n. 39 above), 69–70, no. 6.

49 Matthew 27:54 and 57–61; Mark 15:39 and 42–47.

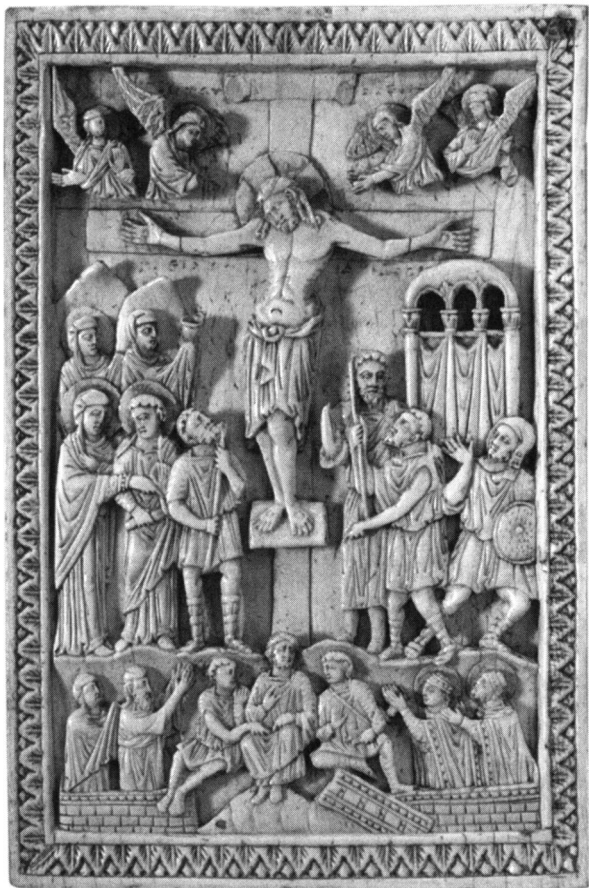


FIG. 13 St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, ivory panel. The Crucifixion. Photo courtesy of The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

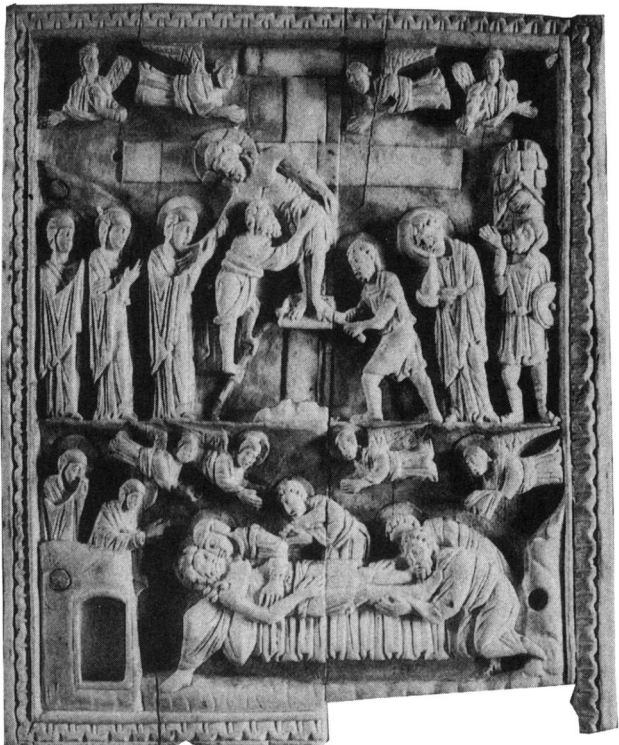


FIG. 14 Ravenna, Museo Nazionale, ivory panel. The Deposition and Lamentation. After L. Martini and C. Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini e medievali nel Museo Nazionale di Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1990), no. 6

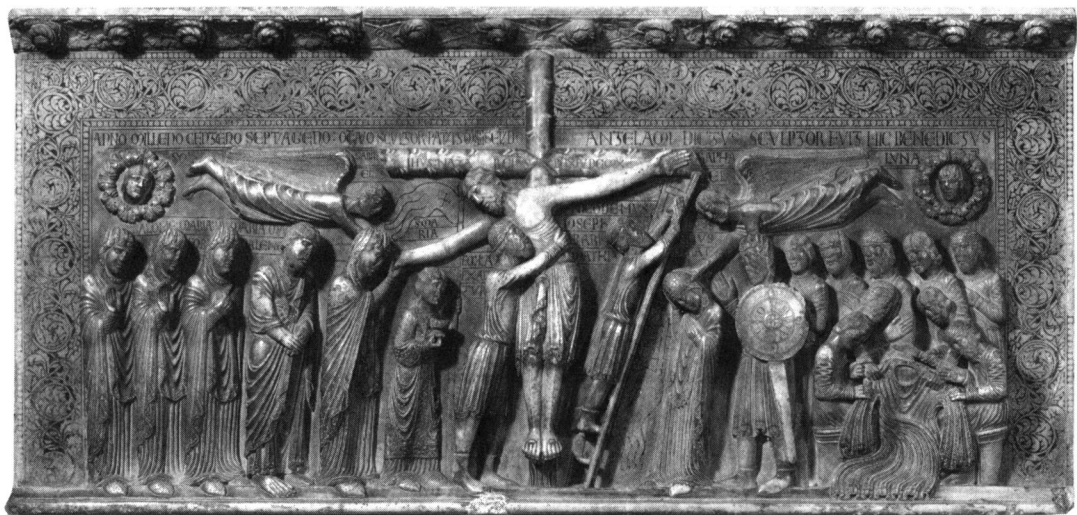


FIG. 15 Parma, Cathedral, marble relief by Benedetto Antelami. The Deposition. Photo courtesy of Scala/Art Resource, New York

Cathedral, dated by inscription to 1178 (fig. 15).⁵⁰ In this carving the centurion appears immediately to the right of Synagogue, who is pushed down by an angel. Like the soldier in the ivories, he wears a cloth on his head, carries a round shield, and raises his right hand in acknowledgment of Christ. He is identified without question by the word “Centurio” incised on his shield, and by the words “Vere iste filius Dei erat” engraved to the left of him. Another Italian portrayal of the Deposition that includes the centurion is the mid-thirteenth-century stone tympanum on the façade of San Martino at Lucca.⁵¹

A particularly strange depiction of the Deposition appears on an ivory at Hildesheim (fig. 16).⁵² Here, as the Virgin prepares to take her son’s body into her arms, she stands on a stool. This motif is without parallel in Byzantium, although the Virgin and Saint John do occasionally stand on platforms in western Crucifixion and Deposition scenes.⁵³ On the other side of the cross, Saint John stands on a tall rocky mound, a feature that we have seen in other scenes among the ivories of the frame group.

The carvings of the frame group display a fondness for portrayals of the Lamentation, which, for the most part, follow standard Byzantine iconography. However, on one panel now in the Wernher Collection

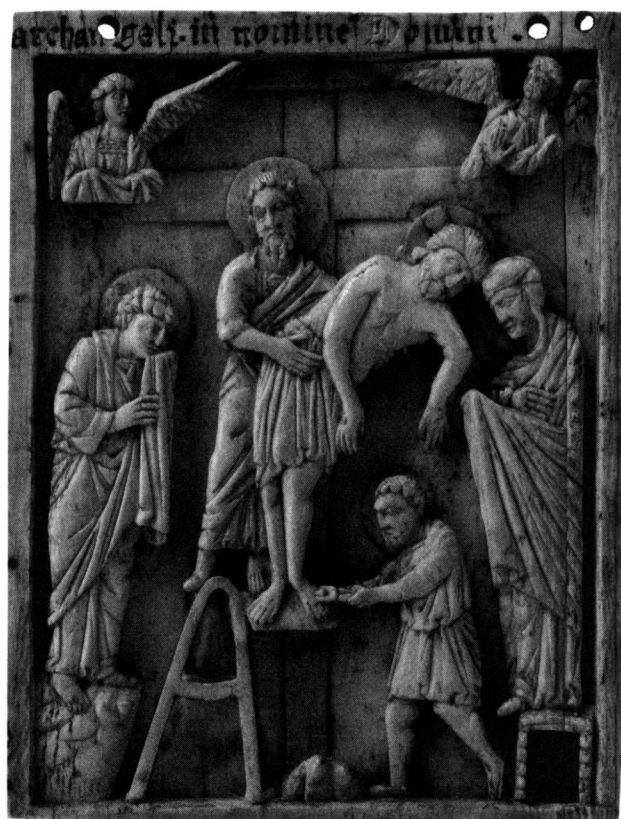


FIG. 16
Hildesheim, Dom- und Diözesanmuseum, ivory panel.
The Deposition. Photo courtesy of Dom-Museum,
Hildesheim

50 G. Capelli, *La “Deposizione” di Benedetto Antelami* (Parma, 1980), 6–7, 17; W. Sauerländer, “Benedetto Antelami,” in *Benedetto Antelami e il Battistero di Parma*, ed. C. Frugoni (Turin, 1995), 3–69, esp. 11.

51 A. F. Moskowitz, *Italian Gothic Sculpture, c. 1250–1400* (Cambridge, 2001), 41.

52 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:78, no. 219, pl. 70; Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium* (n. 8 above), 493–94, no. 329; M. Brandt and A. Effenberger, eds., *Byzanz: Die Macht der Bilder*, exhibition catalogue, Dom-Museum (Hildesheim, 1998), 102, no. 42, pl. 82.

53 The only exception among “Byzantine” Deposition scenes is an ivory panel now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, but formerly in the Trivulzio Collection in Milan, which appears to be a later Italian copy of the ivory in Hildesheim, or of its very close relative. See Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:78, no. 220, pl. 70; Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium*, 494. For the Virgin and St. John on supports in the Crucifixion in the West, see Goldschmidt, *Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 3: no. 23, pl. 7 (twelfth-century plaque in the Landesmuseum, Darmstadt; n. 34 above). For the Deposition, see the thirteenth-century wooden group in the Cathedral of Volterra, where the Virgin and St. John are elevated on low pedestals of cubic form; J. White, *Art and Architecture in Italy, 1250 to 1400* (Harmondsworth, 1966), 53.

in London, a significant variation can be found (fig. 4).⁵⁴ As in other Byzantine portrayals of the Lamentation, such as the well-known fresco of 1164 at Nerezi, the Virgin holds the upper body of Christ in her lap, while Joseph and Nicodemus embrace his feet (fig. 6).⁵⁵ In the painting, Saint John stands behind Christ kissing his hand, but in the Wernher ivory he kneels.⁵⁶ In standard Byzantine iconography, Christ’s body conceals the standing apostle’s legs, leaving his head and arms visible.

54 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:76, no. 209, pl. 68.

55 I. Sinkevic, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi: Architecture, Programme, Patronage* (Wiesbaden, 2000), 50–52, figs. 46, 48.

56 The only Byzantine Lamentation scene that I am aware of in which St. John kneels as he kisses Christ’s hand is at the Church of the Ascension at Kučevište; Millet, *L’iconographie de l’évangile* (n. 36 above), fig. 550.

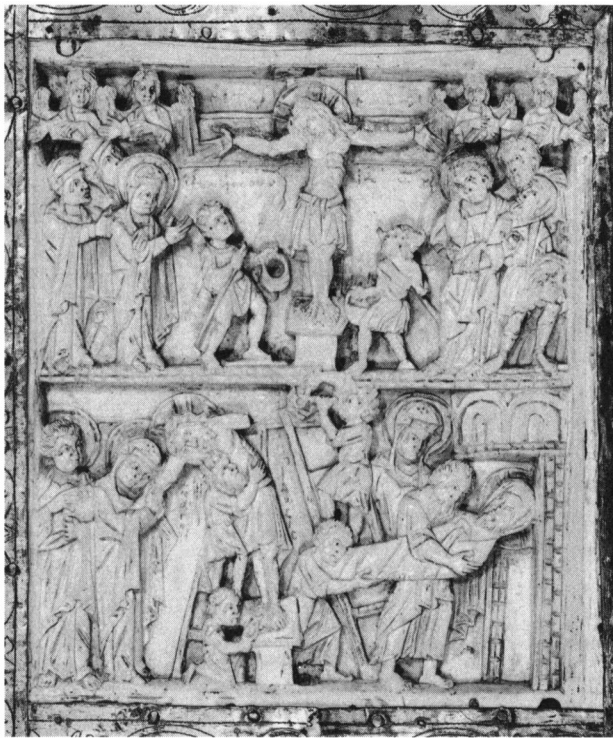


FIG. 17
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm. 6831,
ivory cover. The Crucifixion, Deposition, and
Entombment. Photo courtesy of Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek, Munich

In the ivory, since John is crouching, his whole body is raised up in order for him to be visible. Consequently, Saint John kneels on a ledge carved into the depth of the ivory above the corpse. The only parallel I know to this composition occurs in the Lamentation miniature of the Melisende Psalter from Jerusalem (fig. 5).⁵⁷ In this painting, the artist dispenses with the rocky background, replacing it with a sheet of gold. As a result, Saint John appears to levitate as he kneels, an effect even stranger than that seen in the ivory.

Besides the partial representation on the Crucifixion ivory in St. Petersburg (fig. 13), the frame group contains three complete portrayals of the Anastasis (e.g., figs. 4 and 18).⁵⁸ In their basic compositions, these scenes correspond to a Byzantine variant of the Anastasis that appears from the eleventh century

onward in a number of works from Byzantium and the Holy Land.⁵⁹ However, in an ivory now in Lyon, there is an apparent anomaly (fig. 18).⁶⁰ Here, as is customary, we see the defeated Hades beneath the feet of Christ, but behind Hades, instead of the broken gates of Hell, there is a kind of uneven, hollowed-out, rocky mound on which Christ stands as he pulls Adam from his tomb. This feature is without parallel in Byzantine portrayals of the scene. Goldschmidt and Weitzmann commented that the trapezoidal form of this mound seems to reflect the shape created by the gates as they lie against each other and the covers of the sarcophagi in many Byzantine portrayals of the Anastasis, such as the mosaic of circa 1100 at Daphni (fig. 19).⁶¹ Other scholars have seen the strange rock in the ivory as a misunderstanding of standard Byzantine iconography.⁶²

Another idiosyncratic composition can be found in an ivory of the Dormition at Ravenna, which also belongs to the frame group (fig. 20).⁶³ This panel presents a feature found in other examples from the series. The apostles Peter and Paul, at the head and foot of the Virgin's bed, stand on rocky ledges that protrude into the right and left corners of the composition. The

59 In this variant, Christ strides from left to right, turning back to grasp Adam. Eve stands behind Adam, while David and Solomon stand on the right, sometimes with John the Baptist behind them. For Byzantine examples, see, for instance, the frescoes of Çarıklı Kilise in Cappadocia (M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor* [Greenwich, 1967], 2: fig. 210) and of Lagoudera (A. Nicolaïdès, "L'église de la Panagia Arakiotissa à Lagoudéra, Chypre: Étude iconographique des fresques de 1192," *DOP* 50 [1996]: 1–137, fig. 68). The type was used consistently in the orbit of the Holy Land, in the Melisende Psalter (British Library, Egerton MS 1139, fol. 9v; Folda, *Art of the Crusaders* [n. 15 above], pl. 6.8r), on the seals of the patriarchs of Jerusalem (Folda, *ibid.*, 230–31, pl. 7.10a), on lead pilgrims' flasks from the Holy Sepulcher (*ibid.*, 295–96, pl. 8B.9b), on an icon at Mount Sinai (*ibid.*, 406–8, pl. 9.38), and probably in the lost mosaic of the main apse of the crusader church of the Holy Sepulcher (*ibid.*, 320–31; A. Borg, "The Lost Apse Mosaic of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem," in *The Vanishing Past*, ed. A. Borg and A. Martindale [Oxford, 1980], 7–12).

60 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2: 77, no. 218, pl. 70; *Byzance* (n. 8 above), 263, no. 172.

61 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2: 77. E. Diez and O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaics in Greece: Hosios Lucas and Daphni* (Cambridge, 1931), 69–72, fig. 100.

62 *Byzance*, 263.

63 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2: 75, no. 206, pl. 67; Martini and Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini* (n. 39 above), 71–73, no. 8.

57 See n. 32, above.

58 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2: 76–77, nos. 209, 217–18, pls. 68, 70.



FIG. 18 (above, left)
Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, ivory panel.
The Anastasis. Photo by H. Maguire

FIG. 19 (above, right)
Daphni, monastery church, mosaic.
The Anastasis. Photo courtesy of
Dumbarton Oaks Image Collections
and Fieldwork Archives, Washington, DC



FIG. 20 (left)
Ravenna, Museo Nazionale, ivory panel.
The Dormition. After L. Martini and
C. Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini e medievali
nel Museo Nazionale di Ravenna*
(Ravenna, 1990), no. 8

Dormition was a popular subject among Byzantine ivories, but this panel is the only one to show the two apostles raised up in this manner. The intrusion of stony supports is all the more striking because the elevation of Peter and Paul causes a strange distortion in the proportions of the bed, which is unnaturally tall (compare with figs. 4 and 23–24).

To sum up, in many of the scenes portrayed by the ivories of the frame group there is a departure from standard Byzantine practice. In some cases these anomalies are relatively minor, but in others they betray major differences in the interpretation of sacred narrative. Most of these variances from Byzantine iconography have parallels in western medieval art, in works produced either in Europe or in the Holy Land. Whereas one might consider one or two western features to be part of the normal variation of Byzantine art, the number and the variety displayed in this small group of works strongly suggest that they were produced for a western clientele.

Pilgrims' Desires

If the frame group ivories were manufactured for western consumers, is it possible to define that market more closely? In the following pages, I shall be arguing that the panels would have been especially appropriate for one particular group of westerners, namely people who visited or had an interest in the Holy Land. We have seen already that one of the ivories contains a unique portrayal of the Annunciation, which depicts the twin columns inserted by the crusaders into the grotto at Nazareth (fig. 1). In addition to this topographical reference to a pilgrimage site, another ivory contains an unusual depiction of the Lamentation that matches a work of art from Palestine (figs. 4–5). It can also be noted that the frame group as a whole portrays a selection of subjects that is consistent with an overriding interest in the holy places of the *terra sancta*. These stylistically and technically related panels all depict events from the New Testament;⁶⁴ there are

no portrait icons of the Virgin with Child or of other saints, even though these are common in Byzantine ivory carving in general.⁶⁵ Many of the subjects are the same as those depicted on the early Byzantine pilgrims' flasks from Palestine, including the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, the Crucifixion, the Women at the Tomb, and the Ascension.⁶⁶ The ampullae do not portray the Anastasis, the Deposition, or the Lamentation—scenes that occur with relative frequency on the ivories—because these iconographies had not been invented before Iconoclasm. The Anastasis was portrayed, however, on the seals issued by the patriarchs of Jerusalem after 1149.⁶⁷

In their selection of New Testament scenes, the carvers of the frame group ivories showed a distinct preference for episodes from the Passion. Among the twenty-four panels attributed by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann to this group, there are three portrayals of the Crucifixion, five of the Lamentation, and six of the Deposition. Only the Nativity, which occurs seven times, appears more frequently than any one of these scenes. In the context of pilgrimage, the Passion scenes, of course, referred to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was the ultimate goal of pilgrims to the Holy Land. The guidebooks written by twelfth-century pilgrims to Jerusalem describe not only the chapel of Calvary, the site of Christ's Crucifixion, and the Sepulcher in which he was buried, but also the location outside the tomb where his body was placed after the Deposition by Joseph and Nicodemus,⁶⁸ and the Chapel of Saint Mary where the Virgin anointed her son's body before burial.⁶⁹ The events of the Passion were set before pilgrims by mosaics at the holy sites. The twelfth-century guidebooks record depictions of the Crucifixion, the Deposition, and the Entombment in the

of the Magi (2), Presentation (2), Transfiguration (1), Lazarus (2), Entry (1), Crucifixion (3), Deposition (6), Women at the Tomb (1), Lamentation (5), Anastasis (3), Christ Appearing to the Women (1), Dormition (3), Pentecost (1), Ascension (2).

65 Cutler, *Hand of the Master* (n. 11 above), 250.

66 On the pilgrims' flasks, see A. Grabar, *Ampoules de terre sainte* (Paris, 1958).

67 Folda, *Art of the Crusaders* (n. 15 above), 230–31, pl. 7.10a.

68 Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage* (n. 16 above), 238 (*Second Guide*), 278, 282 (Theoderic).

69 Ibid., 36, 103 (Saewulf).

64 The following is a list of subjects with the number of examples given in parentheses, taken from the ivories attributed by Goldschmidt and Weitzmann to the frame group, with the addition of the newly discovered panel of the Annunciation sold at Christie's: Annunciation (3), Nativity (7), The Adoration

chapel of Calvary,⁷⁰ while the Entombment was portrayed again over the entrance to the Sepulcher itself.⁷¹

One of the peculiarities of the selection of subjects in the ivories of the frame group is that there are twice as many portrayals of the Deposition (six) as of the Crucifixion (three). This reverses the proportion found in the corpus of Byzantine ivories outside the frame group, where one finds fifty-eight depictions of the Crucifixion as opposed to only eight of the Deposition. Instances in which the Deposition was favored over the Crucifixion are attested elsewhere in both Byzantine and western painting from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and can be related to the increasing preoccupation in the liturgy and in art with the laments of the Virgin.⁷² This phenomenon is also symptomatic of an interest in Passion relics, which were highlighted in the Deposition scene. An interest in the relics from Christ's death was certainly not confined to Palestinian pilgrims, but nevertheless formed a major part of their experience.⁷³ Although twelfth-century visitors to Palestine acknowledged that the empress Helena had removed much of the True Cross to Constantinople, they still believed that a substantial part of it remained in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.⁷⁴ Some identified this relic with the cross that the emperor Heraclius had saved from the Persians.⁷⁵ We hear of kings and patriarchs of Jerusalem, and even cantors of the Holy Sepulcher, sending fragments of the cross

to favored recipients in western Europe.⁷⁶ This largess undoubtedly increased the profile of Jerusalem as the locus of the relic.

Besides the cross, both the nails and the pincers used to remove them were reputed to be in the Holy Land, even though the pincers and at least one, if not more, of the nails were also claimed to be in Constantinople.⁷⁷ The twelfth-century guidebooks report that two of the nails were kept in the chapel of the king of Jerusalem,⁷⁸ while a third nail and the pincers had been taken to Bethlehem.⁷⁹ The hammer was also said to be in Bethlehem.⁸⁰

The Deposition scene emphasizes the cross, the nails, and the pincers far more than the traditional iconography of the Crucifixion.⁸¹ In a normal Crucifixion image, much of the cross is covered by the body of Christ (fig. 13). This problem had already been faced by the makers of late sixth-century Palestinian ampullae, which, according to their inscriptions, contained "oil of the wood of life of the holy places of Christ." Their solution was to depict Christ in bust form at the top of the cross, so that the relic "of the wood of life" could be seen unobstructed at the center of the composition.⁸² The carvers of the ivories adopted a different solution, which respected the conventions of contemporary Byzantine art. In the panel in Ravenna, the artist, by illustrating the Deposition in preference to the

70 Ibid., 129 (Daniel the Abbot), 259 (John of Würzburg), 286 (Theoderic); Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 233–34.

71 Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 278 (Theoderic); Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 232.

72 See C. Jolivet-Lévy, "Images et espace culturel à Byzance: L'exemple d'une église de Cappadoce (Karşı Kilise, 1212)," in M. Kaplan, ed., *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident, études comparées*, Byzantina sorbonensia 18 (Paris, 2001), 163–81, esp. 176, n. 57, fig. 15. For the same phenomenon in western medieval painting, see J. Baschet, *Lieu sacré, lieu d'images: Les fresques de Bominaco (Abruzzes, 1263); thèmes, parcours, fonctions* (Paris, 1991), 179–84.

73 For recent treatments of the western acquisition of Passion relics during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see J. Durand and M.-P. Laffitte, eds., *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle*, exhibition catalogue, Musée du Louvre (Paris, 2001); J. Durand and B. Flusin, *Byzance et les reliques du Christ* (Paris, 2004).

74 Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 263 (John of Würzburg).

75 Ibid., 283 (Theoderic).

76 Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 83, 97, 167.

77 A nail is listed in the inventory of relics in the chapel of the Pharos composed in 1200 by their guardian, Nicolas Mesarites; Durand and Laffitte, *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle*, 29. On the other hand, Anthony of Novgorod listed more than one nail in the palace (M. Ehrhard, trans., "Le livre du pèlerin d'Antoine de Novgorod," *Romania* 58 [1932]: 44–65, esp. 57), while Robert of Clari reported that the Pharos housed two nails (E. H. McNeal, trans., *Robert of Clari: The Conquest of Constantinople* [Toronto, 1996], 103).

78 Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 205 (*Work on Geography*).

79 Ibid., 205 (*Work on Geography*), 241 (*Second Guide*).

80 Ibid., 241 (*Second Guide*).

81 This emphasis on the relics shown in the Deposition can be seen as the beginning of a process that led, at the end of the middle ages, to an exclusive focus on depictions of the relics themselves as illustrations of the devotional prayer on the *arma Christi*. See K. M. Rudy, "An Illustrated Mid-fifteenth-century Primer for a Flemish Girl: British Library, Harley MS 3828," *JWarb* 69 (2006): 51–94, esp. 76–85. I am grateful to Jonathan Alexander for this reference.

82 Grabar, *Ampoules de terre sainte* (n. 66 above), 55–58, pls. 11–14, 16, 18, 26, 28, 34–35.

Crucifixion, was able to focus more attention on the cross itself, whose surface was more fully revealed by the removal of Christ's body (fig. 14). A parallel use of the Deposition to display the cross as a relic can be found in the Esztergom reliquary, a Byzantine work that probably dates to the twelfth century.⁸³ On this object, two enamels depicting narrative scenes—Christ being led to the Crucifixion and the Deposition—frame the central fragment of the True Cross.

The ivories of the frame group portray two variants of the Deposition scene, both derived from Byzantine models. In one version, Nicodemus uses a pair of pincers to remove a nail from Christ's hand, as seen in ivories in Constance and, before the figure of Nicodemus was lost, in Berlin.⁸⁴ In the other version, the nail is removed from Christ's foot, as in the panels of London (fig. 4), Ravenna (fig. 14), and Hildesheim (fig. 16).⁸⁵ As we have seen, the ivory in Hildesheim (fig. 16) displays a unique detail, which, it can be argued, responded to a desire to emphasize the relics of the nail and the pincers. On this panel, the Virgin stands elevated on a stool. The reason for this odd feature becomes apparent if the ivory in Hildesheim is compared with an undoubtedly Byzantine ivory of the Deposition now in Munich (fig. 17).⁸⁶ Here, as in the Hildesheim ivory, the Virgin stands with her head close to that of her son, thus stressing their intimacy. But on the Munich panel, Nicodemus kneels down to take out the nail, which allows the Virgin to embrace Christ's arm without being artificially lifted up.⁸⁷ However, the carver of the ivory in Hildesheim evidently wished to give the pincers and the nail more emphasis by moving them up closer to the center of the composition, and perhaps also wished to bestow more dignity on the removal of the nail by having Nicodemus stand rather

than crouch. As a result, the Virgin had to be raised on a stool so that her body would not become disproportionately tall.

In sum, the selection of scenes in the frame group is consonant with the interests of Holy Land pilgrims, since the ivories all depict episodes from the life of Christ in Palestine. The emphasis on the events and relics of Christ's death also fits with this interpretation, even if visitors to Palestine were not alone in their increasing interest in the Passion and in their desire for relics of the Crucifixion.

One of the most striking features of the ivories is their frequent portrayal of rocky outcrops, whether as a support for the angel of the Annunciation at Nazareth (figs. 7–8), for Anna prophesying in the temple (fig. 12), for Saint John mourning at the Deposition (fig. 16), for Christ rising from his sepulcher (fig. 18), or for the apostles at the death of the Virgin (fig. 20). It is tempting to link this fondness for the portrayal of rocks and stones with the pilgrims' desire to collect pieces of stone from the holy places as relics. At Nazareth, the site of the Annunciation was originally a cave in a rocky outcrop, which was essentially framed by the crusader church (fig. 2). The rock occupied part of the north aisle, where it projected some three meters above the floor. On the north side of the outcrop, the crusaders left a passageway between it and the north wall of the church to facilitate the circulation of pilgrims along the aisle. To accommodate the passageway, the architects had to create an exedra in the north wall of the church. They left the north face of the rock, facing the passage, bare, except for framing courses of masonry at the top and sides.⁸⁸ Thus the rock itself was exposed to pilgrims, who were able to break off pieces to take as souvenirs.⁸⁹ The account of the pilgrim Belard of Ascoli, written around 1155, stresses that the natural rock of the holy site was exposed: "The room of Our Lady, into which the angel came to her, was a cave. . . . It is not made of stones, but is as it were dug out of the rock."⁹⁰

83 Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium* (n. 8 above), 81, no. 40.

84 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:75, nos. 207–8, pl. 68.

85 Ibid., 2:75–76, 78, nos. 204, 209, 219, pls. 67–68, 70. A panel in Pesaro also has this iconography; *ibid.*, 2:76, no. 211b, pl. 69.

86 Ibid., 2:30, no. 22a, pl. 6. Color illustration in Cutler, *Hand of the Master* (n. 11 above), pl. 7.

87 Compare the composition of an ivory leaf in the Kestner Museum, Hannover; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:37, no. 40, pl. 17. For examples in other media in which Nicodemus kneels or crouches, see, for instance, Millet, *L'iconographie de l'évangile* (n. 36 above), figs. 496–99, 505, 513, 515; Sinkevič, *Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi* (n. 55 above), fig. 45.

88 Bagatti, *Scavi di Nazaret* (n. 18 above), 2:60–61; Folda, *Nazareth Capitals* (n. 15 above), 16–18.

89 This practice continued into the nineteenth century, as reported by M. de Vogüé, *Les églises de la terre sainte* (Paris, 1860), 349.

90 "Cella Domine, in quam ingressus est angelus ad eam cripta fuit . . . non ex lapidibus facta, sed sic in saxo cavata." S. De Sandoli, *Itinera Hierosolymitana cruce signatorum (saec. XII–XIII)* (Jerusalem, 1978–83), 2:46; trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage* (n. 16 above), 229.

Pilgrims also tried to take relics from the much-venerated columns of the Angel and of the Virgin, but since these were made of granite, it was more difficult to break pieces away from them. Speaking of the column of the Virgin, Niccolò da Poggibonsi warned his fellow pilgrims: “know that it is very strong, so that it is impossible to have of it.”⁹¹ Evidently others were more successful in removing pieces, because in 1620 Tommaso Obicini wrote that the column had been completely destroyed in its lower part, so that the rest of it was hanging from the ceiling of the cave like a stalactite. Obicini attributes the damage to superstitious Moors hunting for treasure, but it is more likely to have been the work of pious pilgrims.⁹² One of the medieval visitors to Nazareth, Giacomo da Verona, records that he equipped himself with appropriate chisels, so that “I received some of the stone of that place.”⁹³ Stones from Nazareth ended up in several different places in Europe. An inventory of Saint Albans Monastery in England, dated between 1375 and 1381, mentions three crosses, each containing a fragment of the True Cross, together with other relics, including stone from “the place of the Annunciation.”⁹⁴ One of the ivories in the frame group, a panel depicting the Nativity now in the Louvre, is currently enclosed in a wooden backing which houses several pieces of stone from the Holy Land (fig. 21). Among these is a relic labeled: “Stone of Nazareth, where the angel made the Annunciation to Mary.”⁹⁵ As will be shown below, it is possible that this ivory was carved specifically to accompany these souvenirs from Palestine.

A similar context may account for the unusual representation of Anna in the ivory of the Presentation from the Robert von Hirsch collection, in which she stands on a rock, instead of on the steps of the bema of the Temple (fig. 12). The crusaders associated the Dome of the Rock, an Umayyad building, with the site of the

Presentation.⁹⁶ Then, as now, the most conspicuous feature of the building was the great mass of stone that filled its center. A guidebook written before 1114 says of the Temple: “There is a very large rock in the center, where there is an altar, and there the Lord was presented by his parents and received by Saint Symeon.”⁹⁷ Another guide, of around 1160, states: “In the middle of the Temple is placed a great stone. . . . Next to this place the son of God was presented.”⁹⁸ From here, also, little pieces of stone were taken and distributed around Europe. In 1156 Foulcher, the patriarch of Jerusalem, sent to Conrad, Duke of Dalmatia, a fragment of the True Cross accompanied by stone relics, including one “from the place of the Presentation in the Temple.”⁹⁹ Another such stone ended up in the church of San Giacomo at Scossacavalli in Rome, where the relic was identified in the Renaissance as: “The stone on which the Virgin Mary once presented her child in the Temple according to the custom of the Hebrews.”¹⁰⁰

As noted, the ivory of the Deposition in Hildesheim depicts Saint John standing to the left of the cross on a pile of stones (fig. 16). The place of Christ’s Deposition also provided relics to collections in western Europe. For example, the late fourteenth-century collection of relics at Saint Albans Monastery contained a “stone of the Deposition from the cross,” which presumably came either from the place of Christ’s Deposition, or from the stone on which he was laid to be prepared for burial.¹⁰¹

Of course, the stone of stones was the rock of the Holy Sepulcher itself, pieces of which were scattered all over the West. Usually these relics are simply designated in the sources as being from the tomb, but sometimes it is specified that they belonged to the stone that

91 Bacchi and Bagatti, *Niccolò da Poggibonsi* (n. 22 above), chap. 127; P. B. Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi,” *OCP* 15 (1949): 126–66, esp. 155.

92 Bagatti, *Excavations in Nazareth*, vol. 1 (n. 18 above), 176, n. 1. Quaresmius also reported that the lower part of the column had been broken away; De Sandoli, *Francisci Quaresmii* (n. 19 above), 389.

93 Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi,” 155.

94 A. Frolow, *La relique de la Vraie Croix: Recherches sur le développement d’un culte* (Paris, 1961), 522.

95 Durand, “L’icône reliquaire” (n. 8 above), 32.

96 On the Dome of the Rock, see O. Grabar, *The Dome of the Rock* (Cambridge, MA, 2006).

97 “Maxima quoque rupis est in medio ejus, ubi est altare, et ibi fuit Dominus a parentibus suis oblatus, et a sancto Symeone receptus.” *De situ urbis Jerusalem*, ed. De Vogüé, *Les églises de la terre sainte* (n. 89 above), 412; trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage* (n. 16 above), 177.

98 “In medio templo est magnus lapis positus. . . . Et hic juxta Dei filius praesentatus fuit.” *Seventh Guide*, ed. T. Tobler, *Descriptiones terrae sanctae ex saeculo VIII., IX., XII., et XV.* (Leipzig, 1874), 101–2; trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 233–34.

99 Frolow, *Relique de la Vraie Croix*, 335.

100 Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi” (n. 91 above), 141.

101 Frolow, *Relique de la Vraie Croix*, 522.

sealed the Sepulcher, on which the angel sat after it had been rolled away from the opening. To list only a few of many examples, around 600 a stone labeled as being “from the life-giving Anastasis” was among the collection of stones and pieces of wood from the Holy Land contained in a painted box placed in the altar of the Sancta Sanctorum in Rome.¹⁰² In 799, the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent “relics from the sepulcher of the Lord” to Charlemagne, and a relic “from the stone of the Holy Sepulcher” accompanied the consecration of the new church of the Abbey of Montecassino in 1071.¹⁰³ Several other western altars, from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, are said to have been dedicated with stones from the same source.¹⁰⁴ An inventory of the monastery of Zwiefalten, dated 1141, lists a little golden cross containing pieces of the True Cross and “stones detached . . . from the tomb.”¹⁰⁵ Among the sources that specifically mention the stone that closed the grave, we may note the presence in the eleventh century at San Millán de Colgolla of a piece “from the stone with which the Sepulcher of the Lord was sealed.”¹⁰⁶

Given the predilection of pilgrims for removing pieces of the Holy Sepulcher as souvenirs, the guardians had to take measures to preserve it. The Russian pilgrim Daniel tells how he had to bribe the keeper of the key to break off “a small piece of the blessed rock,” so that he could depart “rejoicing as if I was carrying some rich treasure.”¹⁰⁷ When Foulque III Nerra, the Count of Anjou, visited the Holy Sepulcher at the turn of the eleventh century, he encountered difficulties with the Muslim authorities. Eventually, he had to resort to biting off a piece of the stone from the tomb with his teeth. On his return from his pilgrimage, he deposited

this relic at his newly founded monastery of the Holy Sepulcher at Beaulieu.¹⁰⁸

The western obsession with the stone of the Holy Sepulcher provides a possible explanation for the rocky form on which Christ stands in the ivory of the Anastasis at Lyon (fig. 18). The ivory behind the prone figure of Hades is deeply excavated, so that his left elbow is completely undercut. Thus Hades lies in a cave beneath the risen Christ. This rock is not simply a misunderstanding of the gates of Hell as they appeared in standard Byzantine iconography, but rather is an attempt to depict the material of the tomb itself. The twelfth-century pilgrims John of Würzburg and Theoderic both recorded the Latin inscriptions inside and around the tomb chamber in the crusader church. These inscriptions did not mention the gates of Hell, but instead stressed Christ’s entombment within the rock, followed by his defeat of Satan and rescue of Adam. Thus, John of Würzburg found the following verses inside the chamber of the Sepulcher: “While Christ is entombed thus under stones, at his burial heaven is opened wide to man.”¹⁰⁹ Theoderic saw a poem on the exterior of the tomb monument, which read in part: “he who suffered at Golgotha, and was buried in the rock, here raised Adam to the stars, conquered the devices of the devil, and caused him who had fallen to rise.”¹¹⁰ The portrayal of the Anastasis on the ivory in Lyon, therefore, responded to the experiences and desires of western pilgrims to Jerusalem, in that it emphasized the rocky material of Christ’s tomb as well as his victory over the devil and his saving of Adam.¹¹¹

102 A. J. Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago, 2006), 22–24.

103 Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi,” 128–29.

104 Frolow, *Relique de la Vraie Croix*, 237 (Trier, St. Maximin, in 949), 276–77 (Schaffhausen, in 1064), 329 (Trier, St. Paulin, in 1147), 367 (Dijon, St. Bénigne, in the twelfth century).

105 Ibid., 324. The inventory from St. Albans Monastery also lists a relic from the tomb; *ibid.*, 522.

106 Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi,” 129. There was another piece of this stone in Oviedo in the eleventh century, and at the Monastery of St. Riquier in the ninth century.

107 Trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage* (n. 16 above), 170–71.

108 L. Halphen and R. Poupardin, eds. *Chronica de gestis consulum Andegavorum* (Paris, 1913), 50–51; Frolow, *Relique de la Vraie Croix*, 143, 259.

109 “Sub lapidis dum sic Christus tumulatur / Ejus ad exequias homini coelum reseratur.” De Sandoli, *Itinera Hierosolymitana* (n. 90 above), 2:260; Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 262.

110 “. . . Golgata passum, petra sepultum. / Hic prothoplastum vexit ad astrum, / Demonis astum vicit, et ipsum / Surgere lapsum dans. . . .” De Sandoli, *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, 2:322. Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 280.

111 Another depiction of the Anastasis that appears to foreground the rock is the innovative miniature by T’oros Roslin in the Gospel Book in Jerusalem, Armenian Patriarchate, MS 1956, fol. 110r, where David, Solomon, and John the Baptist rise on the right behind a series of stony outcrops; Der Nersessian, *Miniature Painting* (n. 38 above), 61, fig. 216.

A similar wish to evoke the stony, cavelike setting of a holy place in Jerusalem may account for the strange elevation of Peter and Paul on rocky ledges found in the ivory of the Dormition in Ravenna (fig. 20). At the end of the twelfth century, the Byzantine pilgrim John Phocas graphically described the subterranean site in Gethsemane where the body of the Virgin had been laid out and then buried: “[The church] is built round the underground pit in which is the holy tomb of the mother of God. . . . And in the middle of it stands her tomb, like an ambo. It has been hewn out of the rock in the shape of a building with four vaults. And in its east side from the same rock a kind of couch has been carved, covered by white marbles, on which the immaculate body of the most holy Mother of God was laid by the holy apostles when they brought it here from Sion.”¹¹² At the beginning of the same century, Daniel the Abbot also described the stone ledge on which the body of the Virgin had rested: “And on the floor of this cave opposite the door there is cut a shelf into the rock and on this shelf was laid the sacred body of our most pure lady and Mother of God and thence it was carried up uncorrupted to heaven.”¹¹³ When the marble slabs that covered the tomb of the Virgin were removed in 1972, the rock-cut bench inside was found to be pockmarked with holes from the depredations of early pilgrims.¹¹⁴ One of the stones from the tomb found its way into the collection of the Sancta Sanctorum in Rome.¹¹⁵ When Patriarch Foulcher sent relics from Jerusalem to Conrad, Duke of Dalmatia, in 1156, he included a stone from the Virgin’s tomb.¹¹⁶ Surviving epigrams indicate that in the twelfth century the Byzantines also were collecting fragments of the Virgin’s tomb and wearing them in *encolpia*.¹¹⁷

112 PG 133:944D–945A; trans. after Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 325, with modifications.

113 Trans. in *ibid.*, 134.

114 B. Bagatti, M. Piccirillo, and A. Prodromo, *New Discoveries at the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in Gethsemane* (Jerusalem, 1975), 42–43, pl. 13.

115 Bagatti, “Eulogie palastinesi” (n. 91 above), 136.

116 Frolov, *Relique de la Vraie Croix* (n. 94 above), 335.

117 The poems are in the collection of the Biblioteca Marciana, MS Gr. 524, ed. S. Lampros, *Néος Ἑλλ.* 8 (1911): 144, nos. 215, 217; S. Lerou, “L’usage des reliques du Christ par les empereurs aux XI^e et XII^e siècles: le saint bois et les saintes pierres,” in Durand and Flusin, *Byzance et les reliques du Christ* (n. 73 above), 159–82, esp. 177–79.

Besides the collecting of stone relics, another aspect of the pilgrims’ experience that may be reflected in the ivories of the frame group is the concept of mimesis—the pilgrim’s imitation or reenactment of the actions carried out by the original participants in sacred history. The best-known example of mimesis among Holy Land pilgrims is their emulation of the Magi, who, like the medieval pilgrims, made a journey to visit the birthplace of Christ. Gary Vikan has shown that on late sixth-century Palestinian ampullae, the supplicants adoring the cross were already portrayed as Magi, with long hair, trousers, and Phrygian caps.¹¹⁸ The narratives written by Palestinian pilgrims attest that they associated themselves with the Magi until the end of the Middle Ages. A striking example is Felix Fabri, who in the late fifteenth century wove the imitation of the Magi into several stages of his itinerary to Bethlehem. At the place halfway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, where the Magi saw the star for the second time, Fabri says, “We rejoiced together with the three Magi, reading and singing that which is appointed in the processional.”¹¹⁹ In the Church of the Nativity itself, at the site of the well from which the servants of the Magi drew water for their camels and dromedaries, Fabri declares, “Here, in the company of the holy kings, we made ready to enter the inn with joy and true devotion.”¹²⁰ And finally, in the grotto beneath the church at “the place in which the blessed Virgin Mary sat with the boy Jesus on her lap, when the three kings came in with their gifts, and offered them to her, in this place, likewise, we fell upon our faces, as did the three kings, and offered ourselves to the Lord Christ, and received indulgences, singing the hymn of the three kings, and the proper prayers.”¹²¹

The identification of the Magi with pilgrims to Bethlehem helps to explain the anomalous features of the ivory showing the Nativity in the Walters Art Museum (fig. 9). In this panel, the principal role in the scene is given to the Magi, or pilgrims, at the expense of the shepherds, who were traditionally present but here

118 G. Vikan, “Pilgrims in Magi’s Clothing: The Impact of Mimesis on Early Byzantine Pilgrimage Art,” in *The Blessings of Pilgrimage*, ed. R. Ousterhout (Urbana, 1990), 97–107, esp. 103.

119 A. Stewart, trans., *Felix Fabri*, Palestine Pilgrims’ Text Society 8 (London, 1897), 542.

120 *Ibid.*, 556–57.

121 *Ibid.*, 561–62.

are not shown at all. Furthermore, the most prominent place in the composition is occupied by the crib, which is situated at the center between the first Magus and the Virgin, even though it is empty. The angel at the right even appears to gesture toward the vacant manger rather than to the child on his mother's lap. The ivory gives the curious impression that the Magi have come to venerate the crib rather than Christ and the Virgin. In a sense, this was precisely the experience of the medieval pilgrims to Bethlehem, for whom the now-empty manger was one of the high points of their visit, and also a major source of stone relics. Most of the twelfth-century guides describe the manger in their accounts of Bethlehem.¹²² By the time Theoderic made his visit, between 1169 and 1172, the crib had been enclosed in a white marble casing with "three round holes, through which pilgrims can give their long-desired kisses to the manger."¹²³ A few years later, John Phocas also described a protective marble with an aperture.¹²⁴ Doubtless it was needed to prevent pilgrims from breaking off pieces of the manger.

We have many records of stones from the manger reaching the West. The small golden cross recorded in the inventory from Zwiefalten held, besides stones from the tomb of Christ, "stones detached from the manger."¹²⁵ Likewise, the gift of relics sent by Foulcher to Conrad in 1156 contained a piece of the crib in addition to the True Cross fragment and the stone from the place of the Presentation.¹²⁶ Stones from the crib were frequently placed in altars, perhaps because of the liturgical association of the manger with the table of Christ's sacrifice.¹²⁷ Churches whose altars were dedicated with such relics included Saint Maximin at Trier, in 949, and Saint Paulin in the same city, in 1147.¹²⁸ Sometimes the documents mention, in addition to relics from the crib, stones from other parts of the

grotto at Bethlehem, especially from the place where Christ was born, although stones from the manger are the most common. For example, in the twelfth century the convent of Muri in Switzerland received from Judenta von Herznach an ivory reliquary containing, among other objects, stones from the crib and from the place of the Nativity.¹²⁹ The three crosses recorded in the inventory of 1375–81 from Saint Albans Monastery contained, besides the cross fragments and the stone from Nazareth, stones from the crib and "the bed of the Nativity."¹³⁰

In summary, the deviations from standard iconography seen in the ivory in Baltimore would have made sense in terms of the interests and desires of pilgrims to Bethlehem, even if they would have appeared uncanonical to an orthodox Byzantine viewer.

Another unconventional iconographic feature that may find an explanation in the practices of pilgrims is the kneeling figure of Saint John seen in the portrayals of the Lamentation in the ivory from the Wernher Collection and in the Melisende Psalter (figs. 4, 5). As discussed, Byzantine artists usually showed Saint John standing behind Christ as he embraces his master's hand, rather than crouching down in a position levitated above the body. However, John's posture in the two anomalous works corresponds exactly to the experiences of twelfth-century pilgrims when they visited the Holy Sepulcher. The abbot Daniel, at the beginning of the century, recorded that he "bowed down before that worthy tomb and kissed with love and tears the place where the body of our Lord Jesus Christ lay."¹³¹ On a second visit, he described how he was "bowing down before the holy tomb and kissing with love and tears the holy place where the most pure body of our Lord Jesus Christ lay. . . ." ¹³² Toward the end of the same century, Theoderic reported, "The mouth of the cave [of the sepulcher] cannot be entered by anyone without crawling on his knees." He related that the space inside the cave was cramped, allowing only five people to kneel in veneration at the same time: "The floor which is between the sepulcher and the wall has enough space for five people with their faces towards the sepulcher to kneel down." Finally, Theoderic described how the side of the

122 Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage* (n. 16 above), 89 (*First Guide*), 108 (Saewulf), 143 (Daniel the Abbot).

123 "Tria foramina rotunda, per quae peregrini ipsi praesepti optata porrigunt oscula." De Sandoli, *Itinera Hierosolymitana* (n. 90 above), 2:364; trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 306.

124 PG 133:957; Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 333.

125 Frolov, *Relique de la Vraie Croix* (n. 94 above), 324.

126 Ibid., 335.

127 Schiller, *Ikonographie* (n. 46 above), 1: 81.

128 Frolov, *Relique de la Vraie Croix*, 237, 329.

129 Ibid., 358.

130 Ibid., 522.

131 Trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 167.

132 Ibid., 170.

tomb itself was encased in marble, in which there were “three round holes through which travelers give the kisses they have for so long desired to give to the stones on which the Lord lay.”¹³³

A late thirteenth-century manuscript painting from Acre depicts pilgrims with staffs venerating the Holy Sepulcher. At the left, a pilgrim crouches beside one of the three round openings to bestow his kisses on the sacred rock of the tomb. On the right, another kneels at the end of the tomb, clasping it with both hands.¹³⁴ Here we can see that the actions of Saint John in the Lamentation scenes of the ivory panel and the Melisende Psalter, kneeling down and fervently kissing the Lord’s hand, replicated the actions of medieval pilgrims to the site of Christ’s burial. In the ivory, the relief is deep so that John is, in effect, crouching in an excavated cavity, which has the ledge beneath him as its floor and the outcrop above his back as its roof. The depth of the carving is such that the forearm of Christ, which the saint clasps, is completely undercut. Thus, like the pilgrims, John kneels in a cave cut into the rock.

In summary, the ivories of the frame group can be said to respond to the concerns of Holy Land pilgrims in several ways. Not only is there a direct portrayal of the architecture of a particular shrine at Nazareth, but also the selection of subjects corresponds with the locations associated with the life and death of Christ in Palestine. Often the ivories portray the rocky features that were, and are, prominent aspects of the holy sites, and from which stone relics were disseminated. In a couple instances, mimesis, the desire of pilgrims to emulate the actors in the sacred events, can also explain the unusual iconography of the images. Bearing these observations in mind, it is time to turn to the question of the original uses of the ivories.

133 “Ipsam autem os speluncae non nisi rependo cruribus quislibet valet intrare. . . . Planities vero inter ipsum sepulchrum et murum posita tantum obtinet spatii, ut quinque homines versis ad sepulchrum capitibus locum habeant geniculatim orandi. . . . Tria in latere rotunda habet foramina, per quae ipsi lapidi, in quo Dominus jacuit, optata peregrini porriguntur oscula.” De Sandoli, *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, 2:320. Trans. in Wilkinson, Hill, and Ryan, *Jerusalem Pilgrimage*, 279.

134 William of Tyre, *History of Outremer*, Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, MS Plut LXI.10, fol. 10r.; J. Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291* (Cambridge, 2005), 495–97, and fig. 470 on the CD.

Functions

With one exception, the frame group ivories are no longer in their original settings. However, it is clear that many members of the group were made to be set into some kind of backing, rather than to stand on their own. The backs of some of the plaques are roughly finished, and thus cannot have been intended to be visible. Others have been deliberately scored for mounting.¹³⁵ In a few instances we can infer that the surviving panels were originally framed by ornamental borders that have been cut off, so it is no longer possible to determine whether they were hinged.¹³⁶ However, most of the intact plaques lacked hinges, by which they could have been attached directly to other ivories to create diptychs or triptychs.¹³⁷ Furthermore, seven of the compositions are made up of more than one piece of ivory. The panel in Ravenna that depicts the Nativity, for example, is composed of two separate pieces of ivory that join in a vertical seam down the middle (fig. 10).¹³⁸ Its companion piece, the panel depicting the Deposition with the Lamentation, is also divided down the middle, but in

135 The back of the panel with the Lamentation in The Metropolitan Museum of Art is unfinished; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:76–77, no. 213, pl. 69. The original composition on the back of the Nativity plaque now in the Louvre was roughly shaved back, leaving its outlines still visible; Durand, “L’icône reliquaire,” 39, fig. 18. A panel with the Nativity and Crucifixion in the Liverpool Museum has an older leaf border carved on its back, which was cut back when the New Testament scenes were carved on the front; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:77, no. 215, fig. 33, pl. 69; M. Gibson, *The Liverpool Ivories: Late Antique and Medieval Ivory and Bone Carving in Liverpool Museum and the Walker Art Gallery* (London, 1994), 45–46, pl. 16b. The back of the panel with the Anastasis in Lyon was lightly scored with diagonal lines crossing each other.

136 For example, the panel with the Annunciation in Pesaro has part of a zigzag pattern on its right side (fig. 8), similar to that seen in a complete form on an Ascension ivory in Ravenna. A second panel in Pesaro, depicting the Nativity and the Deposition, displays the remains of such a border on both sides. The ivory with New Testament scenes in the Victoria and Albert Museum carries traces of a leaf border, now shaved off, on its left and right sides (fig. 1). Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:73–76, nos. 198, 205, 211a and b, pls. 66–67, 69.

137 The panel with the Presentation from the Robert von Hirsch collection has cuts in the left border to accommodate hinges, but they appear to be later additions; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:77, no. 214, pl. 69.

138 Ibid., 2:74, no. 203, pl. 67; Martini and Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini* (n. 39 above), 67–69, no. 5.

this case the carver had to add a third strip on the right side of the composition to contain its frame of schematic leaves (fig. 14).¹³⁹ Two other frame group panels in Ravenna, depicting the Dormition and the Ascension respectively, are also composed of two separate plaques of ivory, but here the seams run horizontally (e.g., fig. 20).¹⁴⁰ In the Deposition panel at Hildesheim, the right-hand border and the right edges of the Virgin and the angel above are carved on a separate strip (fig. 16).¹⁴¹ The ivory of the Nativity in Paris and one of the Dormition in St. Petersburg also had strips added to them to contain the framing motif of stylized palmettes (figs. 21 and 23).¹⁴² In the case of the Nativity panel, the strips on the top, bottom, and right sides are carved in bone, while the one on the left is a modern replacement made of plaster (fig. 21).¹⁴³ In all these examples, the separate pieces of the panel must originally have been held together by a backing, most likely of wood. Their lack of integrity as freestanding objects suggests that these ivories were made to be inserted into larger ensembles, such as icons, book covers, or reliquaries.

In only one instance do we still have the original setting of a frame group ivory. A panel of the Nativity, formerly in the Marquet de Vasselot collection and now in the Louvre, is currently set into a reliquary (fig. 21). The reliquary is composed of a wooden backing, covered by a silver gilt revetment that frames the ivory at the center. A recent technical examination at the Louvre, published by Jannic Durand, has helped to clarify the complex sequence of events that created this object.¹⁴⁴ The metal framing strips originally portrayed a *Deesis* at the top, with three medallions containing Christ flanked by the Virgin and Saint John the Baptist. Along the sides and bottom of the frame there were portraits of eleven apostles, also in medallions.

Comparisons with Byzantine metalwork indicate that this frame is Byzantine work of the eleventh or twelfth century.¹⁴⁵ Since only eleven apostles appeared in the roundels, it is probable that the metal strips originally framed an icon of the twelfth apostle.¹⁴⁶ An icon in the monastery on Patmos provides a parallel for this arrangement. It depicts Saint John the Theologian surrounded by a silver gilt frame containing images of the *Deesis* and the other eleven apostles.¹⁴⁷

At some point, the icon in the metal frame now in the Louvre was removed, and the present ivory of the Nativity was inserted in its place. The carver of the ivory reused an older panel from the early Christian period, which originally had a composition of a beribboned wreath encircling a cross.¹⁴⁸ The artist shaved off the wreath, and turned the panel around so that he could carve the Nativity on its reverse. Since the old panel was too small to fit into the opening provided by the Byzantine metal frame, he had to expand it by adding strips of bone on all four sides that contain the palmette border. At some point, also, the images of Christ and five of the apostles were removed, and in their place round cavities were cut into the wood backing to contain relics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, five of these cavities were covered by transparent pieces of horn and still preserved their relics, but the sixth cavity, at the lower left, was covered by a broken piece of mica and was empty (fig. 21). The mica has now been replaced by plastic.¹⁴⁹ Under the five pieces of horn are labels that identify the relics in a Gothic script that was written probably in the late fourteenth or the fifteenth century in northern Europe. The principal relic is at the top of the reliquary, in the center. Its label reads, "From the place in which Christ was born, from the wood and stone of his crib."¹⁵⁰ Then, at the top right, we have: "From the Mount of Olives and the sacred Mount of

139 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:75, no. 204, pl. 67; Martini and Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini*, 69–70, no. 6.

140 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:75, nos. 205–6, pl. 67; Martini and Rizzardi, *Avori bizantini*, 70–73, nos. 7–8.

141 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:78, no. 219, pl. 70; Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium* (n. 8 above), 493–94, no. 329.

142 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:73–74, nos. 197, 202, pls. 65–66.

143 Durand, "L'icône reliquaire" (n. 8 above), 29–31.

144 Ibid.

145 Ibid., 34–35.

146 Ibid., 38.

147 Ibid.; A. D. Kominis, ed., *Patmos: Treasures of the Monastery* (Athens, 1988), 107–8, pl. 4.

148 Durand, "L'icône reliquaire," 39, fig. 18.

149 Ibid., 31, n. 12, fig. 17. On mica windows in medieval reliquaries, see N. Edwards, "Celtic Saints and Early Medieval Archaeology," in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. A. Thacker and R. Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), 255–66, esp. 246–47.

150 "De loco in quo Christus natus est; de ligno ac petra presepsis sui"; Durand, "L'icône reliquaire," 31, fig. 3.

FIG. 21
Paris, Musée du Louvre,
reliquary. The Nativity and
Saints. Photo courtesy of
Musée du Louvre



Calvary,”¹⁵¹ and at the lower right, “From various holy and exceptional places of the Holy Land.”¹⁵² At the center of the bottom of the frame there is: “From the beam on which Saint John made his penance,”¹⁵³ and at the top of the lefthand side, “Stone of Nazareth, where the angel made the Annunciation to Mary.”¹⁵⁴

Such assemblages of stones from various sites in the Holy Land could be found in western European collections throughout the Middle Ages. There has already been occasion to mention the contents of the early medieval painted box in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, which, in addition to the “Anastasis,” lists the stones’ origins as Bethlehem, the Mount of Olives, and Sion.¹⁵⁵ Also previously cited are the late medieval cross reliquaries

at Saint Albans Monastery, which, besides the stones from Nazareth, Bethlehem, and the Holy Sepulcher, had pieces from “the altar of the Circumcision,” Gethsemane, the rock of Calvary, “the place of the Ascension,” and the Golden Gate.¹⁵⁶ A similar selection of stones accompanied the cross fragment that Foulcher, patriarch of Jerusalem, sent in 1156 to Conrad, Duke of Dalmatia. This collection included particles of the crib, the place of the Presentation in the Temple, the Garden of Gethsemane, Calvary, the tomb, the Mount of Olives, and the Virgin’s tomb.¹⁵⁷ The twelfth-century ivory reliquary that Judenta von Herznach gave to the convent of Muri contained, in addition to the stones from Bethlehem, a “rock on which Christ has walked,” and one of the stones thrown at Saint Stephen.¹⁵⁸

In his publication, Durand suggests that the transformation of the object in the Louvre into a reliquary for stones took place at the end of the fourteenth or in the fifteenth century, when the current identifying labels were written. The person who added the relics gave prominence to the stone and wood of the manger,

151 “De monte Oliveti et de sacro monte Calvarie”; *ibid.*, 31.

152 “De diversis sanctis ac precipuis locis terre sancte”; *ibid.*, 32.

153 “De assere super quem sanctus Ioannes egit suam penitentiam”; *ibid.*, 32.

154 “Lapis de Nazaret ubi angelus nuntiavit Mariae”; *ibid.*, 32. The missing relic in the cavity on the lower left side can be identified from another list of the relics on a piece of parchment glued to the reverse of the wooden backing, which identifies the sixth one as “de lapide e quo Moyses ictu verge tres fontes elicit” (“from the rock from which Moses drew forth three springs by a blow of his rod”).

155 Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem* (n. 102 above), 22.

156 Frolow, *Relique de la Vraie Croix* (n. 94 above), 522.

157 *Ibid.*, 335.

158 *Ibid.*, 368.

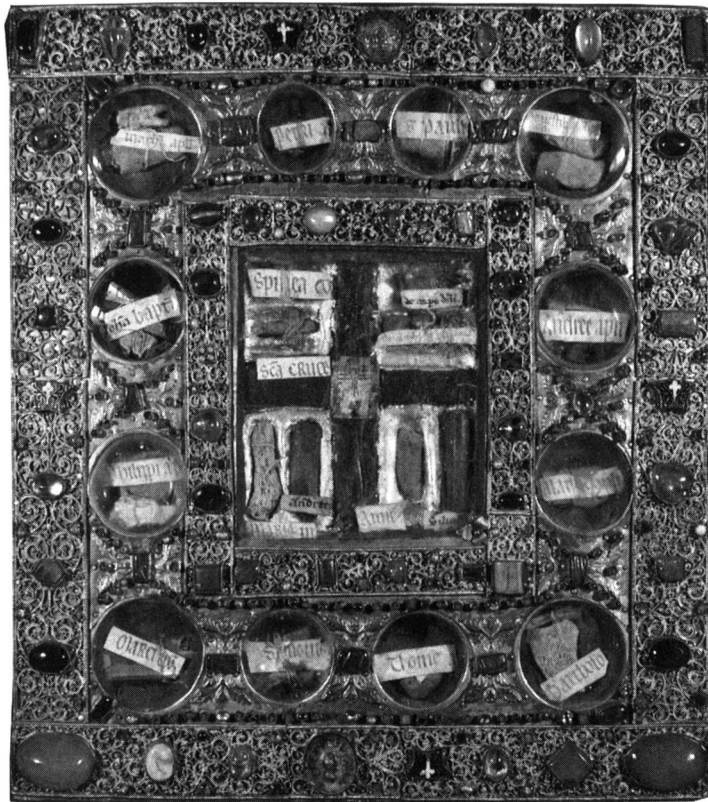


FIG. 22
Halberstadt, Cathedral
Treasury, reliquary.
Photo courtesy of
Cathedral Treasury,
Halberstadt

at the top center of the frame, because the ivory icon, which formed part of the assemblage, already portrayed the Nativity.¹⁵⁹ But one could propose that the reliquary was created at an earlier date, resulting in the following sequence for its manufacture. First, there was a Byzantine icon of an apostle with a metal frame containing medallions portraying a *Deesis* and eleven portraits of the other apostles. Then the icon was converted into a reliquary by replacing six of the medallions with carved depressions containing relics from various sites in the Holy Land.¹⁶⁰ At the same time, an ivory of the Nativity was incorporated to accompany the principal relics of the wood and stone of the manger, in place of the older portrait icon. Discs of mica were placed over the relics to protect them. By the late Middle Ages, five of the discs were broken and had to be replaced by pieces of horn. This is when the identifying inscriptions, which

may originally have been in Greek, were replaced by new authenticating inscriptions in Latin. Finally, by the early twentieth century, the remaining mica disc had cracked and both the relics that it protected and its authentication had been lost. This chronology accounts for the presence of the disc of mica, which is hard to explain if one assumes that the object first became a reliquary when the horn covers were inserted at the end of the Middle Ages. Since the discs of horn are well preserved, it is unlikely that one of them would have needed to be replaced subsequently by the mica. On the other hand, if this one mica disc was still relatively well preserved when the reliquary was renovated in the late fourteenth or fifteenth century, the late-medieval restorers may have wished to keep it, since that material was more precious.

An early thirteenth-century cross reliquary preserved in the cathedral treasury of Halberstadt is similar in its design to the reliquary in the Louvre (fig. 22).¹⁶¹ It provides some support for the hypothesis

159 Durand, "L'icône reliquaire" (n. 8 above), 32, 38–39.

160 This operation disrupted the hierarchy of the medallions, because Christ was moved from his central position at the top of the frame to its lower right corner. In this way the medallion of Christ was preserved without the removal of any of the saints at the top of the frame: the Virgin, John the Baptist, Peter, or Paul. The hierarchical relationship of Christ to the other figures was preserved through the relic manifesting his birth.

161 Durand, "L'icône reliquaire," 32, fig. 5; *Ornamenta ecclesiae: Kunst und Künstler der Romanik* (Cologne, 1985), 3:133, no. H*1; P. Janke, *Ein heilbringender Schatz: Die Reliquienverehrung am Halberstädter Dom im Mittelalter, Geschichte, Kult und Kunst* (Munich, 2006), 144–47.

that the Nativity ivory may have been associated with its accompanying relics before the late Middle Ages. The Halberstadt reliquary contains a particle of the True Cross, together with other relics, which Bishop Conrad von Krosigk brought back from Constantinople in 1208, although the reliquary itself seems to have been made shortly after the death of the bishop in 1225.¹⁶² The reliquary is composed of a wooden backing with a silver cladding. A square depression in the center houses several relics, including fragments of the cross and a thorn from the crown, and also, nailed onto the intersection of the two principal pieces of the cross, a small Byzantine silver plaque inlaid with niello portraying the Crucifixion. This icon was already several centuries old when it was incorporated into the reliquary, since Christ is portrayed in the old style with a *colobium*.¹⁶³ All these items are covered by a large square slab of rock crystal. Surrounding the square central compartment, in an arrangement reminiscent of the reliquary in the Louvre, are twelve circular depressions containing relics of the apostles, each covered by a disc of rock crystal.

Another frame group ivory that may originally have been inserted into a reliquary is the panel with the Deposition at Hildesheim (fig. 16). An inventory of the treasury of Hildesheim Cathedral, dating from 1438, provides a clue concerning its original location. This document lists a “*plenarius*” incorporating an ivory of the Deposition, which could well be the one that survives today.¹⁶⁴ In late medieval German sources, “*plenarium*” had several meanings. The word referred to a liturgical book containing the full texts of the Gospels and the Epistles, but it could also be applied to such a book that contained relics in its cover, as many did, and, by extension, to a reliquary that was not attached to a book.¹⁶⁵ *Plenaria* sometimes incorporated ivories, as in the case of an example now in the Landesmuseum of Darmstadt, which was serving as a reliquary by the

sixteenth century.¹⁶⁶ The front cover of this book has a thirteenth-century metal surround enclosing a leaf from a late antique consular diptych. The relic is housed under a large oval crystal at the bottom of the frame. A fourteenth-century reliquary from the Welfenschatz in the shape of a book has an eleventh-century ivory depicting the Marriage at Cana set into its metal cover; the relics are housed beneath the ivory itself.¹⁶⁷ Such *Plenaria* incorporating ivories and containing relics were made as early as the ninth century, as evidenced by a pair of covers in the Cathedral of Noyon, which came from the monastery of Morienvall.¹⁶⁸ Thus the “*plenarius*” that incorporated the Deposition ivory at Hildesheim may well have been a reliquary. Given the conspicuous pile of stones on which Saint John stands, it is tempting to speculate that the contents of the reliquary could have included a “stone of the Deposition from the cross,” such as the one owned by the monastery at Saint Albans.

In summary, at least one, and in all likelihood two, of the ivories from the frame group were set into reliquaries. We cannot demonstrate that any of the other ivories accompanied relics, but many of their compositions evoke the rocky settings of Palestinian sites. If the panels were originally set into objects such as framed icons or book covers, the stones depicted in the ivories would have called to mind the Holy Land as a source of relics. If they were set into reliquaries containing stones, like the Nativity ivory now in the Louvre, the user of such a container would have been able to replicate the experiences of a visitor to the Holy Land. Just as pilgrims such as John of Würzburg and Theoderic viewed and touched the holy places, and saw the events that had taken place there depicted in works of art at the shrines, so, too, could the user of the reliquary see the sacred story depicted in the ivory and venerate the very stones from the place where it had occurred. The image and the stones were mutually

162 Janke, *Ein heilbringender Schatz*, 84, 145.

163 Ibid., 147, fig. 40.

164 A. Zeller, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Hannover*, vol. 2, *Regierungsbezirk Hildesheim*, part 4, *Stadt Hildesheim: Kirchliche Bauten* (Hannover, 1911), 112.

165 J. Braun, *Die Reliquiare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1940), 46, 283; J. F. Niermeyer and C. Van de Kieft, *Mediae latinitatis lexicon minus* (Leiden, 2002), 1054.

166 Braun, *Reliquiare*, 284, fig. 265; T. Jülich, *Die mittelalterlichen Elfenbeinarbeiten des Hessischen Landesmuseums Darmstadt* (Regensburg, 2007), 26–31, no. 1.

167 *Der Welfenschatz*, exhibition catalogue, Städel'sches Kunstinstitut (Frankfurt, 1930), 55, no. 43, pl. 22; Braun, *Reliquiare*, 284; C. Little, “Again the Cleveland Book-Shaped Reliquary,” in J. Ehlers and D. Kötzsche, eds., *Der Welfenschatz und sein Umkreis* (Mainz, 1998), 77–92.

168 A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karolingischen und sächsischen Kaiser* (Berlin, 1914), 1:59, no. 119, pl. 52; Braun, *Reliquiare*, 283, fig. 264.

self-supporting; the picture animated the stones, and the stones grounded the picture in reality.

We come, finally, to the question of the ivories' Byzantine style and iconography. If these ivories were intended to evoke the sites and relics of the Holy Land for Westerners, why were they carved in evident imitation of Byzantine art? The answer is provided by the small Byzantine silver plaque depicting the Crucifixion that is enclosed among the relics under the cover of rock crystal in the central compartment of the Halberstadt reliquary (fig. 22). This icon is considerably older than the reliquary itself. Byzantine art, especially a work that appeared to be ancient, could itself acquire a relic-like status,¹⁶⁹ and could thus help to authenticate the pieces of wood and stone with which it was associated.¹⁷⁰ For this reason, the frame group ivories were not only carved in imitation of Byzantine ivories, but they deliberately copied Byzantine ivories from an earlier age, which were already antiquities. We have seen that the ivories of the frame group cannot have been carved before the beginning of the twelfth century, and probably were not produced until several decades had passed after that date. However, the Byzantine models that they evoke date, in all likelihood, to the tenth century. For example, an ivory of the Dormition in St. Petersburg, the pendant to

the Crucifixion illustrated in figure 13, is framed at the top by a pierced canopy supported on columns, which forms a kind of ciborium over the scene (fig. 23). This feature imitates the canopies that cover New Testament scenes in several Byzantine ivories of the tenth century, including a panel with the Dormition now in Munich (fig. 24).¹⁷¹ The main difference is that the carving of the openwork canopy, which was difficult to execute, is much less refined in the frame group ivory than in the Byzantine work.¹⁷²

Goldschmidt and Weitzmann felt that the carvings of the frame group were so close to tenth- and early eleventh-century Byzantine ivories that they had to be nearly contemporary, and thus they assigned the frame group to the eleventh century.¹⁷³ However, the twelfth-century terminus post quem for the frame group panels proposed here leads to a different conclusion. The relationship between them and tenth-century Byzantine ivories was not one of continuation, but of deliberate retrospection and imitation. The ivories of the frame group could have been mistaken for older works that were both more venerable and more prestigious. If they were attached to reliquaries, the imitations could have helped to authenticate the potentially dubious relics within. In terms of materials also, the frame group panels pretended to be more precious than they were. Frequently they were assembled from more than one piece of ivory and filled out with strips of bone. This practice was common in Byzantine secular ivory and bone carvings, but not characteristic of the finer religious pieces.

A somewhat similar phenomenon of intentionally evoked antiquity is found in a group of bronze incense burners, which portray on their bowls scenes associated with the sites of the Holy Land.¹⁷⁴ Several of the images

169 In a few cases, when the icon was the relic itself, the fusion of art and relic was complete. For such a work, see a poem in the Biblioteca Marciana, MS Gr. 524, which records a "Stone from the Holy Tomb of the Theotokos, on which she herself has been imaged"; Lampros (n. 117 above), 144, no. 217.

170 On the western belief in the authenticity of Byzantine images, see H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago, 1994), 304–5, 332. The principle of Byzantine art authenticating relics can also be seen in the mid-twelfth-century Stavelot Triptych, which houses two smaller, Byzantine, enameled triptychs, one incorporating splinters of the True Cross, and the other covering relics of the cross, a nail, the sepulcher, and the Virgin's garment; W. M. Voelke, *The Stavelot Triptych: Mosan Art and the Legend of the True Cross*, exhibition catalogue, Pierpont Morgan Library (New York, 1980), 9–25; Evans and Wixom, *Glory of Byzantium* (n. 8 above), 461–63, no. 301; H. A. Klein, "Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West," *DOP* 58 (2004): 283–314, esp. 299–300. On the phenomenon of cross relics remaining in their Byzantine reliquaries when they reached the West, see Lerou, "L'usage des reliques du Christ" (n. 117 above), 165. On the authentication of relics in reliquaries by means of enclosed Byzantine images of the saints, see J. Durand, "La quatrième croisade: Les reliques et les reliquaires de Constantinople," in *1204 la quatrième croisade: de Blois à Constantinople et éclats d'empire*, ed. I. Villela-Petit, exhibition catalogue (Musée-Château de Blois, 2005), 55–69, esp. 62–63.

171 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* (n. 1 above), 2:25, no. 1, pl. 1. For other examples, see, for instance, *ibid.*, 25, no. 3, pl. 1 (Entry, Berlin), 25–26, no. 4, pl. 2 (Nativity, Paris), 26, no. 6, pl. 2 (Crucifixion, New York), 46, no. 71, pl. 28 (Deposition, Washington).

172 On the skill and labor required to carve the canopies on the Byzantine ivories, see Cutler, *Hand of the Master* (n. 11 above), 135–36.

173 Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen*, 2:20.

174 I. Richter-Siebels, *Die palästinensischen Weihrauchgefäße mit Reliefszenen aus dem Leben Christi* (Berlin, 1990); J. Durand et al., eds., *Armenia sacra: Mémoire chrétienne des Arméniens (IV^e–XVIII^e siècle)*, exhibition catalogue, Musée du Louvre (Paris, 2007), nos. 78–80, pp. 209–10.



FIG. 23 St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, ivory panel. The Dormition. Photo courtesy of The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg



FIG. 24 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm. 4453, ivory cover. The Dormition. Photo courtesy of Hirmer Fotoarchiv

on the censers relate to those on the early Byzantine pilgrims' flasks from Palestine. A censer now in Baghdad, for example, illustrates the architecture of the Holy Sepulcher, complete with its columns, canopy, and even the lamp hanging in the shrine.¹⁷⁵ The distribution of these censers suggests that they were produced in Palestine or Syria.¹⁷⁶ Although many of the censers

are pre-iconoclastic, it is plain that some examples are medieval, possibly as late as the twelfth century.¹⁷⁷ Yet the later vessels reproduced the form and iconography of censers from the early Byzantine period, including the outdated image of the crucified Christ wearing a colobium.¹⁷⁸ Here, also, the deliberately ancient appearance of the objects must have increased their appeal as pilgrimage art.

175 No. 11243/1 in the Iraqi Museum; Richter-Siebels, *Palästinensischen Weibrauchgefäße*, 37, 165; A. Harrak, "The Incense Burner of Takrit: An Iconographical Analysis," *Eastern Christian Art* 3 (2006): 47–52, esp. 49–50, pl. 7.

176 Y. Piatnitsky et al., eds., *Byzantium, Jerusalem: Pilgrimage*

Treasures from the Hermitage, exhibition catalogue (Amsterdam, 2005), 85; Harrak, "Incense Burner of Takrit," 51.

177 Richter-Siebels, *Palästinensischen Weibrauchgefäße*, 257.

178 Ibid., 37, 165; Harrak, "Incense Burner of Takrit," 49, pl. 6.

Conclusion

I have sought to reframe the frame group ivories not as products of a workshop in northern Italy or Constantinople, but as pilgrimage art. The evidence for this move has been, first, the selection of subjects depicted in the ivories, which corresponds to the sacred topography of the Holy Land. Unlike the wider corpus of Byzantine ivories, the frame group panels contain no portrait icons. On the other hand, they include an unusual number of depictions of the Passion, which would have satisfied the special interest of pilgrims in the Holy Sepulcher and its relics. Second, we have seen that one of the ivories portrays a particular Holy Land site, namely the grotto of the Annunciation at Nazareth, with its twin columns (figs. 1–2). Several of the ivories also depict the rocky settings characteristic of Palestinian holy places, such as the cave at Nazareth (figs. 2 and 7–8), the Temple Mount (fig. 12), the Holy Sepulcher (fig. 18), and the tomb of the Virgin (fig. 20). From these places especially, pilgrims collected stones as relics. Third, there are parallels between the ivories and other works of art either produced in or strongly associated with the Holy Land. The distinctive depiction of Saint John in the Lamentation scene, kneeling and levitating above Christ's body, is also painted in the Psalter of Queen Melisende (figs. 4–5). The retrospective interest in earlier Byzantine art, characteristic of the frame group, finds a parallel in bronze censers with Palestinian iconography. Finally, one, and possibly two, of the ivories were attached to reliquaries. One of these reliquaries contains stones from different holy sites in Palestine, although the date of its ivory's first association with these relics is uncertain (fig. 21).

The ivories, for the most part, follow standard Byzantine models, but there are some significant variations from the iconographic conventions of orthodox art. Modern commentators have tended to term these anomalies mistakes or misunderstandings of Byzantine iconography. Here it has been suggested that such departures from the Byzantine norms may have had a consistent purpose, which was to serve the needs of Holy Land pilgrims. The emphasis on the rocky nature of the sites responded to their desire for contact with the stones that had been sanctified by sacred history. The depiction of the Magi venerating the empty crib and of Saint John kneeling beside the tomb of Christ reflected the pilgrims' wish to imitate the actions of the participants in sacred events (figs. 4 and 9). Even

the strange elevation of the Virgin on a stool in the Deposition scene of the Hildesheim ivory may have had a purpose, as it enabled the artist to give more prominence to the precious relics of the nail and the pincers within the overall composition (fig. 16).

Finally, there is the question of date and provenance. A secure terminus post quem is provided by the capture of Nazareth by the crusaders in 1099, and the subsequent insertion of two columns into the grotto of the Annunciation. As already noted, one should probably allow for the passing of several decades after the installation of the columns, before the memory of the crusader construction would have been lost and the columns could be venerated as authentic relics worthy of inclusion in the Annunciation scene in the ivory. The favoring of the Deposition over the Crucifixion also suggests that the panels should not be dated before the later twelfth century. A concrete terminus ante quem is much harder to establish. We can only say for certain that the ivories were being incorporated into western reliquaries by the early fifteenth century at the latest.

Determining the precise place of manufacture of the ivories brings us into the realms of speculation. Here, it is sufficient to point out that their fusion of Byzantine iconography with western elements is a feature found in several works of art produced in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, especially during the twelfth century. The closest parallel is the Melisende Psalter, which incorporates western iconographic features into a series of miniatures derived from a Byzantine feast cycle.¹⁷⁹ There are also parallels among twelfth-century crusader monuments for the use of Greek inscriptions on some of the ivories.¹⁸⁰ Greek inscriptions, for example, feature prominently in the mosaics of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem,¹⁸¹ as well as on smaller works, such as an icon with the twelve feasts at Mount Sinai that was probably painted by a western artist working within the crusader orbit.¹⁸² Even the seals of the Latin patriarchs of

179 Buchthal, *Miniature Painting* (n. 32 above), 1–14; Folda, *Art of the Crusaders* (n. 15 above), 155.

180 See, for example, on the Nativity ivory in Baltimore (fig. 9) and the Dormition in Ravenna (fig. 20).

181 Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 350–53, pls. 9.8b, 9.10, 9.15–17.

182 Ibid., 406–8, pl. 9.38.

Jerusalem bore the Greek legend: H ANACTACIC.¹⁸³ Finally, the covers of the Melisende Psalter demonstrate that the crusaders in Jerusalem were commissioning ivories in the twelfth century, whereas we have no sure knowledge of ivory production in Venice or Constantinople at this time. If the carvers of the ivories in the frame group worked in Palestine, they could have obtained their raw material from Egypt, which was a center for the ivory trade during the Middle Ages.¹⁸⁴ However, their reuse of older carved panels and their frequent joining together of scraps to make larger panels indicate that the supply at their disposal was not plentiful.

The one major argument against the hypothesis that the frame group ivories were produced in the Holy Land is the undeniable difference between their style and technique and that of the covers of the Melisende Psalter. However, it should be remembered that the Melisende Psalter is dated between 1131 and 1143, whereas our ivories may have been produced considerably later. When one considers how little stylistic resemblance there is between the figures on the lintel on the south façade of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, probably dated soon after the middle of the twelfth century, and of the capitals at Nazareth, dated after 1170,¹⁸⁵ it is not so surprising that the frame group panels and the Melisende ivories should be different. If the argument presented in these pages is correct, and the frame

group ivories were indeed associated with pilgrimage to the Holy Land, then production in Palestine seems to be a viable hypothesis, although, given the gaps in the evidence, the possibility cannot be excluded that they were produced elsewhere for the pilgrimage market.¹⁸⁶

Even if the ivories can be classified as “pilgrimage art,” they both resemble and differ from early Byzantine works such as the ampullae in Monza and Bobbio that are usually included under this heading. Both the ivories and the ampullae portray New Testament subjects associated with the holy sites, and in certain scenes both depict specific features of the shrines themselves. However, the ivories reflect the new sensibility of twelfth-century pilgrims, especially their interest in the Deposition and Lamentation and in the sorrows of the Virgin. Most importantly, the panels of the frame group were carved in imitation of earlier Byzantine ivories, to lend them an air of antiquity and authority. When, as occurred eventually in the case of the panel in the Louvre, the ivory accompanied stones from the holy places, the supposed venerability of the art and the supposed authenticity of the relics mutually reinforced each other. Nevertheless, the ivories betray their true nature by small anomalous details that responded to the outlook and desires of the original western owners of the pieces. When subjected to close examination, even the best imitations yield some information about the consumers for whom they were made.

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183 Borg, “Lost Apse Mosaic” (n. 59 above), 9, pl. 1.2; Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 230–31, pl. 7.10a.

184 S. Y. Labib, *Handelsgeschichte Ägyptens im Spätmittelalter (1171–1517)* (Wiesbaden, 1965), 335; Cutler, *Hand of the Master* (n. 11 above), 58–59; A. Shalem, “Trade in and the Availability of Ivory: The Picture Given by the Medieval Sources,” in *The Ivories of Muslim Spain*, ed. K. von Folsach and J. Meyer (= *Journal of the David Collection*, vol. 2.1, 2005), 25–35, esp. 30–32; C. Jolivet-Lévy, “A New Ivory Diptych and Two Related Pieces,” in *Interactions: Artistic Interchange between the Eastern and Western Worlds in the Medieval Period*, ed. C. Hourihane (Princeton, 2007), 106–19, esp. 118, n. 55.

185 Folda, *Art of the Crusaders*, 226–27, pl. 7.9c; 414–35, pls. 10.5b–10.6c. On the problem of the date of the lintel, see *ibid.*, 539–40, n. 76.

186 In a recent article, C. Jolivet-Lévy tentatively attributes three ivory diptychs in Warsaw, Chambéry, and a private collection, to the Latin Levant in the thirteenth century, while not excluding a Constantinopolitan provenance. Among possible production sites in the Levant she mentions Jerusalem, Acre, Antioch, and Cyprus; “New Ivory Diptych,” 106–19, esp. 118–19, figs. 1–7.